

RULING IDEAS OF
OUR LORD
CHARLES F. D'ARCY, D.D.

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RULING IDEAS OF OUR LORD

BY

CHARLES F. D'ARCY, D.D.

Dean of Belfast

Author of "Idealism and Theology"

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PREFACE.

IN the following pages an effort is made to exhibit the great dominating ideas of our Lord's moral and religious teaching.

In form, our Lord's teaching is not systematic, but in the substance of it certain conceptions are very distinctly pre-eminent.

The author believes that these conceptions yield, in the ethical sphere, the best and simplest expression of an absolute morality. This he has endeavoured to show. The first part of this little book is therefore a short treatment of Christian Ethics.

The second part deals with the religious ideas, which crown and complete the moral.

The relation of both classes of ideas to modern thought has not been forgotten.

The Scripture quotations are made, almost without exception, from the Revised Version.

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INTRODUCTION.

1. Three Classes of Great Men.—Great men influence the world in three ways: by what they are, by what they do, and by what they say: by character, action, and teaching. Abraham, Socrates, Thomas à Kempis, moved the world by their personality, by being what they were rather than by doing great deeds or setting free any very definite ideas. History is filled with the names of great men who were pre-eminently men of action, David, Alexander, Cæsar, Charlemagne. Great deeds proceed out of great character. None the less, the men of action are distinct from the men of character. In the case of the latter, the world is made better by simply getting to know what kind of men have lived. The third class of great men includes those who have enabled the world to acquire ideas. These are the teachers of mankind. Sometimes the same person will be found to belong to more than one class. Many great teachers and men of action have also influenced the world by revealing their character.

And some very great names are in all three classes. Such are Moses, St. Paul, Athanasius, Luther.

2. The Greatness of Jesus.—Our Lord influenced the world in all three ways, by what He was, by what He did, and by what He said. But, in His case, what He was does not mean simply His character. Even His earliest disciples asked, not merely, What is He? but, Who is He? For them the question was, Is He the Christ? And later, Is He the Son of God? And so, in thinking of the influence which He had upon the world, we must advance beyond the thought of the effect produced by a perfect character.

Our Lord brought about a result unique in history because the manifestation of Himself which He made to the world forced men to believe in Him, first as the Christ, and afterwards, as thought developed and came to itself, as the Incarnate Son of God.

It is necessary to state this fact very plainly for two reasons. First, because the line of thought we have to follow in this book is only one element, one strand, in the whole of Christian doctrine about Christ, and it is necessary that we should realise our limitations. Secondly, because, though we shall have to think more especially of the teachings of Christ, those teachings cannot be wholly separated from the personality of the teacher. Indeed, the teacher and

the teachings are more closely connected in the case of our Lord than in the case of any other teacher.

3. Jesus as Saviour.—It is also necessary to emphasise the importance of our Lord's doings. Otherwise there would be a danger in pursuing the end set before us in this book, lest we should think too exclusively of Christ the Teacher and forget Christ the Saviour. Just as they who, in these latter days, have come to see vividly the wonder of Christ's person are apt to dwell upon the Incarnation to the exclusion of the Atonement; so they who fasten their minds upon the ideas which Christ set free are in danger of forgetting both the Incarnation and the Atonement. We must remember that the Incarnation which is the truth of Christ's person, the salvation which is the fruit of His work, and the ideas which are conveyed by His teaching, are strictly speaking inseparable; and if in these pages we have to think mainly of Christ as a Teacher, it does not follow that we are to lose sight of the other great elements in our Lord's influence upon the world. These other elements will indeed emerge when we come to consider the principal ideas which pervade our Lord's more definitely religious teaching as distinguished from His moral teaching.

4. The Gospels.—Our study of the ruling ideas of our Lord must deal with the words of Jesus

Christ as they are given to us in the four Gospels. We have to take these words, to examine them, and to gain a general view of the principal thoughts which they were intended to present. Our examination will show the presence of certain great organising ideas. The words of Jesus we must take as they have come to us in the Gospels. This is not the place for a critical examination of the work of the evangelists in order to assure ourselves that the four Gospels really contain the words of Jesus. The student who wishes to make such an examination must turn to the large and increasing literature which deals with the subject. There are, however, some reflections which may help to satisfy minds that have perhaps been disturbed through the influence of the modern critical spirit.

5. The Words of Jesus.—First, by whatever process the Gospels reached their present form, whether, that is, the evangelists made use of materials already existing, or depended upon a body of oral tradition, or were supernaturally guided in the writing of every word, the fact remains that the words of our Lord shine by their own light, they carry with them their own credentials. There are no other words like them anywhere. Like the Person who uttered them, they are unique. They are simple yet profound, calm yet intense, “mild yet terrible”. They have

a peculiar force which expresses authority. They do not persuade or entreat or reason with the hearer : they penetrate, they convict, they reveal. The charm and the wonder of them are as fresh to-day, for the unlearned as well as for the learned, as when the people were astonished at His doctrine.

6. The Fourth Gospel.—But the description just given may seem to be more applicable to those words which are found in the first three Gospels (commonly called the Synoptic Gospels) than to the words recorded by the fourth evangelist. The careful reader of the New Testament, even though he be unlearned, must always feel a certain amount of difficulty when he turns from the Synoptic Gospels to St. John. The manner and matter of the discourses in the fourth Gospel contrast in some respects with those of the sayings in the other three. In the Synoptic Gospels the words of Christ are short, abrupt, proverbial in manner, and in substance very largely ethical. In St. John the discourses are longer, often argumentative, and mainly religious. The former deal principally with the human side of things, with rules of life and conduct, with the Kingdom ; the latter, for the most part, are concerned with the King, His Person, His offices, His relation to His Father and to His people.

7. Supplemental Character of the Fourth Gos-

pel.—The difficulty is not as serious as it seems. St. John's Gospel is supplemental in character. Its design throughout is to record events and teachings which had remained unrecorded by the others. The writer must have known the other Gospels. How otherwise could he have so successfully avoided repeating what they had already related? When he does insert an account of anything made familiar by the other writers there is always some obvious reason. Thus He tells the story of the feeding of the five thousand because there is an important discourse depending on it which it is necessary his readers should have.

8. Discourses of the Fourth Gospel.—This supplemental character of the fourth Gospel is not, however, a sufficient explanation of the difficulty under consideration, for it does not explain the difference in style and manner as well as in general character between the discourses of the fourth Gospel and the sayings of the other three. This difference is to be traced to another cause. There is nothing more remarkable in the story of our Lord's life than the extraordinary way in which He adapted Himself to the peculiarities of each person or class of persons that came into contact with Him. In every instance He fitted His treatment to the needs and circumstances of the case. He had no hard and fast rule,

no fixed method of dealing with the spiritual wants of men. Now here we have the main reason of the apparent inconsistency. In the fourth Gospel we have a side of Christ's ministry which appears but slightly in the Synoptics. Speaking generally, the latter contain an account of the Galilean ministry, the former tells of our Lord's doings and sayings on the occasions when He visited Jerusalem. But the persons our Lord encountered in Galilee were very different from those whom He met in Jerusalem. In the one place He had to deal with the masses of an industrial population, in the other with an educated priesthood and a class accustomed to the discussion of legal and theological subtleties. The short proverbial sayings, shining gems of truth, which adorn the pages of the Synoptics were exactly adapted to the people of Galilee. They captivated the imagination. They were instantly grasped and retained by the mind. They carried their authority with them. But the people of Jerusalem required something more. They could not bow to an authority which gave no clear account of itself. With this change of attitude on the part of His hearers, our Lord's manner changed. He condescended to give reasons and explanations and to state the ground of His authority. But there is not really as much difference in style between the discourses in the fourth Gospel and

those in the others as there seems to be. For, in all, the teaching is conveyed in short oracular sentences, and argument, when it occurs, does not follow a regular train of reasoning, but advances by sudden unexplained movements. The method is always one of revelation, not of ratiocination.

9. The Teaching in the Fourth Gospel.—The same reason explains why the matter of our Lord's teaching in St. John is so different from that in the Synoptics. The people of Galilee were not yet fitted for instruction in the deep truths concerning the person and office of the Son of God. They required the milk of proverb and parable. In Jerusalem, our Lord was bound to assert Himself, to lay claim to His Kingdom. Otherwise, how could He have been in a position to say, "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, how often would I have gathered thy children"? (Matt. xxiii. 37).

The fact is, that the Galilean teaching required the Judean teaching as its necessary complement without which it would have been incomplete. A deeper examination reveals a close interdependence between the two. There is no doctrine or aspect of our Lord's person and teaching to be found in St. John's Gospel which cannot also be found, though perhaps less remarkably exhibited, in the Synoptics. The Christ and His work and teaching

are really one and the same throughout all four Gospels.

10. Agreement of the Four Gospels.—These considerations are necessary in order to enable us to use with some degree of certainty the materials provided for us in our New Testament. But let it be understood that what is here insisted on is not a harmony of the four Gospels in the old sense. The effort to form a continuous and harmonious narrative out of the union of the four Gospels by fitting in and accounting for every detail of each has not proved entirely successful. The Gospels are too true to life, too historical, too genuinely human as well as too Divine, to lend themselves to an artificial treatment of the sort. The unity, the harmony, which is here insisted on is an inner and spiritual unity, not a mere harmony of the letter. It consists in the unity of the Person whom the Gospels reveal, the unity of His teaching, the unity of the Spirit which pervades the whole, and the substantial historical agreement of the four books. At the same time, these books abound in differences, in contrasts, in special and separate points of view. They look at the Divine through the medium of the human, and the humanity is as real as the Divinity.

For the purposes of our present investigation this

statement will suffice. We have to try to gain some view of the leading conceptions, the guiding principles, of our Lord's teaching. It is not required of us to enter into the details either of the materials that we use or of the teachings themselves.

11. Division of the Subject.—Our Lord's teaching is progressive. But not rigidly so. He adapted it, not merely to its place in His own life and ministry, but to the needs and spiritual attainments of the persons He addressed. Compare His teaching of the multitude with His words to the disciples and again with His replies to the questionings of educated Jews, and the truth of this statement will become apparent. We can, however, distinguish two very well-marked stages in His teaching. The first is mainly concerned with moral truth. It finds its most perfect expression in the Sermon on the Mount. The second is more distinctively religious. Its greatest representative is the Discourse in the upper room (John xiv.-xvi.).

12. Union of the Moral and Religious in Our Lord's Teaching.—The two stages are not, however, to be separated too definitely. The moral and the religious elements do not stand apart from one another. They are really complementary. The moral teaching has always a religious basis and a religious purpose. The religious

teaching satisfies moral needs and points to a source of moral power. The result of this close union is that, though we may divide the ruling ideas of our Lord into two great divisions, moral and religious, yet it will be found that conceptions which seemed definitely moral are also, from another point of view, definitely religious. Further it will appear that the moral teaching is not merely the formation of a body of truth of general importance, but also a necessary part of that special work which Christ came into the world to do. It has its place in the whole method by which He dealt with the world's need as then presented to Him. For example, Christ was a preacher of repentance as a preparation for the Kingdom. And He taught men the truths of morality in such a way that His teaching became a great preaching of repentance. We shall find then that, when we pass from the moral ideas to the religious, we shall meet familiar conceptions in a new form and endowed with a new power. But it is this new form and this new power which will mark the fact that we have passed from the ethical realm to the spiritual.

PART I.
MORAL IDEAS.

CHAPTER I.

THE KINGDOM.

1. **The Kingdom.**—This idea must be placed first, both on account of its importance and on account of its position in our Lord's teaching. In St. Matthew's Gospel, it is usually termed the *Kingdom of Heaven*. Elsewhere the phrase *Kingdom of God* is uniformly employed. Both terms denote the same thing, but the former indicates the character of the Kingdom as heavenly in its nature, the latter directs attention to the King who reigns over it.

2. **This Idea in the Old Testament.**—The idea of a Kingdom of God did not appear first in the New Testament. The Old Testament doctrine of God as One and as Creator of the universe implies His sovereignty. Also, the very position of Israel as the chosen people of God, the people whom God had marked out as peculiarly His from the time of Abraham, whom He had redeemed from bondage, with whom He had made a covenant, and over whom His providence was ever watching with a view to the great future for which He intended them, leads inevitably to the thought of a Kingdom of God. And so to the Hebrew mind Jehovah was

King over His people. The political constitution of Israel has been termed a Theocracy, and accurately, because always, whether under judges or kings or prophets, the human leaders were looked upon as representatives or agents of Jehovah, the true King of Israel.

3. The Kingdom a Universal Blessing.—From the beginning, the blessing of Israel was seen to have a reference to a larger, a universal blessing (Gen. xii. 3, xviii. 18, etc.). But there was the constant tendency to become narrow, exclusive, and to view the privileges of the chosen people as a blessing to be selfishly enjoyed by the few. Nevertheless, the vision of a great world-wide Kingdom of God is to be found in the Old Testament. The fall of the Kingdom of Judah and the Babylonian exile became the means of opening to the prophetic mind a grander prospect. This is seen especially in the Book of Daniel. There (Dan. ii. 44) we read “The God of heaven shall set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed . . . and it shall stand for ever”. And again (Dan. vii. 13, 14) “I saw in the night visions, and, behold, there came with the clouds of heaven one like unto a Son of man, and He came even to the Ancient of days, and they brought Him near before him. And there was given Him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all the peoples, nations, and languages should serve Him: His dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and His kingdom that which shall

not be destroyed." This is an important passage, because from it, most likely, our Lord adopted the title (Son of Man) by which He usually described Himself; and in it is very clearly expressed the idea of a great world-wide Kingdom ruled over by one who is human, yet comes with signs of supernatural greatness and receives commission from the Most High.

4. The Kingdom in Jewish Thought.—It is plain then that when our Lord came with teachings about a Kingdom of God or Kingdom of Heaven He stirred familiar thoughts in the minds of His Jewish hearers.

The very familiarity of the conception, however, made the Jews connect our Lord's teaching with their own less spiritual thoughts about the Kingdom. The political leaders, in Jerusalem especially, were ever on the watch for the coming of a Kingdom. But the Kingdom they looked for was essentially worldly. They hated the Roman yoke. They longed for political independence. The struggles and victories of the Maccabean age had left traditions which made that independence seem far from impossible.

These ideas had penetrated down into the masses of the people. We gather from the Gospels that, in the time of our Lord, the expectation of some great Person who was to be leader or ruler over the chosen people of God was universal (Matt. ii. 1 ff., xi. 3; Luke iii. 15; John i. 19 ff., iv. 25, etc.). A Kingdom, generally conceived as a great world-power, was

eagerly looked for by the Jews. So persistent was this earthly conception of the Kingdom that even the apostles found it very difficult to free their minds from it (Matt. xx. 21 ff.; Acts i. 6, etc.).

5. John the Baptist.—This was probably one principal reason of the mission of John the Baptist. He came, not so much to create in the minds of the Jews the expectation of the coming of the Christ, for that expectation existed already and had become very powerful, but to moralise and purify the thoughts of the people about the character of the Kingdom as well as to point definitely to the Person of the King. And so the burden of his preaching was “Repent ye, for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand” (Matt. iii. 2). He taught men that their preparation for the Kingdom was to be spiritual, and so indicated the true nature of the Kingdom (see also Matt. iii. 10-12; Luke iii. 10-14).

6. The Nature of the Kingdom.—The first teaching given by our Lord seems to have been, in terms, identical with the teaching of John the Baptist, “Repent, for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand” (Matt. iv. 17). Christ came into the world with a message of gladness and that message concerned “the Gospel of the Kingdom” (Matt. iv. 23, ix. 35, xxiv. 14). Everywhere throughout the evangelical history it is evident that in the minds of the writers, and in the mind of our Lord Himself, the proclamation of the Kingdom was that thing which was, above all, calculated to create joy. It was worthy of being called a

Gospel. It evidently was intended to include all that, at a later period, came to be defined as "Salvation".

The religious aspect of the "Gospel of the Kingdom" will claim our careful attention later on. Now we must confine ourselves to the moral aspect, and must therefore omit, for the present, much that belongs to the essence of the Kingdom as conceived by our Lord.

7. Social Nature of the Kingdom.—In trying to understand what is meant by the Kingdom, we must first think of what is conveyed by the very term itself. The Greek word may be rendered either "Rule" or "Kingdom". But translators and the general sense of all intelligent readers agree in preferring the latter rendering. For, as used by our Lord, the Kingdom is essentially a *social* conception. In its barest elements, it consists of the King and those who are subject to His rule. Even if the former translation given above were adopted, it would be necessary to suppose the *rule* exercised over subjects in order to give any real content to the idea. The Kingdom is the realm of love in which God is supreme. When, therefore, the Kingdom comes, it comes as a social blessing, and not as a blessing for each person in his isolation. It is undoubtedly a blessing for each, but it is a blessing for each because it is first a blessing for all (see note at end of chapter).

This simple thought is especially important when the moral side of our Lord's teaching is under con-

sideration. It is the very first thing to be remembered when an effort is being made to view as a whole the great statement of the Law of the Kingdom contained in the Sermon on the Mount.

That our Lord regarded morality in a way which was essentially *social* is evident from the whole character of His teaching and especially from the manner in which He sums up all moral laws.

8. Character of His Moral Teaching.—Christ nowhere draws up a moral code or lays down systematic rules of conduct. He did not publish another decalogue. On the contrary, He taught principles and showed how to apply them. Moral laws, in the sense in which the Ten Commandments are so called, are generalisations which group actions in certain classes and enjoin or forbid them according as they are good or bad. Our Lord does not lay down laws of this kind. Where He seems to do so, a deeper examination will show that He is really exhibiting an old law in the light of a new principle, or giving illustrations of how the new principles are to be applied (see Matt. v. 21-48, vi. 1-9, vii. 1-6).

What is the nature of these principles, as distinguished from laws in the special sense of the term, will become evident as we proceed. Let it now be noted that they are *principles* in the strict sense of the term. They take us right to the heart of things. They are real universals. Moral laws like the Ten Commandments, however useful and important they may be, are not, strictly speaking, universals; that

is, they do not express the final truth of morality. That this is so appears from the fact that in all ages people have found themselves puzzled by the apparent conflict of one moral law with another, a conflict which led to the formation of the misleading science of casuistry, by which experts in questions of morals thought they could decide cases of difficulty.

Our Lord's teaching soars above all such difficulties by ascending to those great principles which, just because they are principles in the strict sense of the term, can never come into conflict.

9. Difficulties in Our Lord's Moral Teaching.—

A full understanding of the truth just indicated will enable us to see why there is an appearance of paradox about certain of our Lord's illustrations. He shows us the great principle of conduct by means of particular instances. For example, take the case of revenge. Christ says: "Whosoever smiteth thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also. And if any man would go to law with thee, and take away thy coat, let him have thy cloke also. And whosoever shall compel thee to go one mile, go with him twain."

These sayings are found perplexing because they are regarded as laws of the same kind as the law "Thou shalt not steal". But they are nothing of the kind. They are simply particular illustrations of the application of the supreme principle of love. It looks as if our Lord selected instances of a forcibly

paradoxical kind just for the very purpose of driving us on from the particular to the universal. He designed to make the denial of self, the consideration of the welfare of "the other," the most obvious thing possible. He wished to teach us that if we apply the principle of love in every such case we cannot possibly go wrong. There are no exceptions to the law of love.

10. Moral Principles Social.—It will be found that all these principles which our Lord gives resolve themselves into different ways of expressing that supreme law which has just been mentioned. Whether He presents God as the Ideal of character, or lays down the golden rule of conduct, "Whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you even so do unto them," or declares the moral condition which will be demanded as an essential on the part of him who seeks for the forgiveness of his sins (Matt. vi. 14, 15), in all our Lord rises to that point of view from which the good is seen to be one and the same for all, and selfishness is revealed in all its deformity.

11. Summing up of the Commandments.—The truth just stated is perhaps more evident in the passage in which is given a deliberate summing up of the commandments than in any other. "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as

thysself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets" (Matt. xxii. 37, 41).

That this teaching is essentially social is obvious. Here all moral law is resolved into the supreme law of love, and love is, above all, the social principle.

12. The Kingdom as a Social Principle.—That the great ruling conception of the Kingdom should be essentially a social principle is then in accordance with the whole of our Lord's moral teaching. The Sermon on the Mount is, as has been already stated, the law of the Kingdom. This is evident from the position it occupies, from its contents in which will be found frequent and pointed reference to the Kingdom, from its whole character. Now the Sermon on the Mount is penetrated through and through with the social conception of morality. Only, in the Sermon, the idea of the Kingdom receives an illumination from within which becomes a transfiguration. We are permitted to see the inner working of the laws which govern the whole, with the result that what is styled the Kingdom becomes a family under the loving rule of the great Father. But, whatever the name employed, the nature of the thing is evident. It is a social universe in which each is blessed in the blessing of all.

The Sermon on the Mount yields a great deal of important teaching as to the position and characteristics of the Kingdom.

13. The Beatitudes.—The first section of the Sermon contains those utterances which are commonly

called the Beatitudes. Here, it is sometimes thought, is a full and formal description of the ideal Christian character, the character which the citizen of the Kingdom of Heaven is to set before himself as the perfect example at which he is to aim. The incorrectness of such an interpretation appears in several ways. (1) The position of the Beatitudes at the beginning of the Sermon both in St. Matthew and St. Luke shows that they have an introductory character and are a kind of preparation for the rest of the teaching. Our Lord was not a systematic moralist. Nevertheless, it is hardly possible that He put His most detailed account of the virtues into His preface. (2) The characteristics mentioned are negative : exclusively so in St. Luke ; prevailingly so in St. Matthew. If this were intended to be a description of the ideal Christian character, then the moral teaching of Christ would indeed be open to the objection so often made against it that, in contrast with pagan ethics, it failed on the positive side and gave men no standard of active virtue. It was probably the misunderstanding of the purport of the Beatitudes which led to that baseless charge, so often made and so emphatically contradicted by the whole history of Christianity. (3) The position of these utterances in relation to our Lord's whole life and teaching should have sufficed to prevent such misunderstanding. They belong notably to the earlier part of His ministry, when He was among men as one proclaiming a new order of things, publishing a Gospel. He

comes announcing a blessing, and addresses Himself to those who have need of it. The Beatitudes therefore, instead of being regarded as a definition, however informal, of an ideal of character, are simply an address to those persons who are fitted by their needs and spiritual attitude to receive the blessing which Christ came to give.

14. The Beatitudes a Prefatory Address.—

This view harmonises perfectly with the form of expression which is adopted and with the contents of the section as a whole, and indeed in detail. As St. Luke gives it, the passage is obviously an address to certain classes of persons. In St. Matthew, though thrown into the third person, the position and spirit of the passage are those of an address. Both in St. Matthew and St. Luke, the blessing which is promised is plainly stated in the very first sentence to be the Kingdom itself. In the following sentences the very same blessing is promised, but in varying forms of description corresponding to the various needs that are to be satisfied.

15. Meaning of the Beatitudes.—The meaning and force of the whole section may then be expressed as follows. The Kingdom is coming as a blessing for the poor, for those who feel their spiritual poverty as well as for those who lack the good things of this world. It is coming to comfort the mourners, to turn weeping into laughter, to satisfy the hunger of the soul, to give an inheritance to the meek and to show mercy to the merciful. To the pure in heart

it will bring the vision of God and to the peacemakers a place in God's family. So supreme a blessing will the Kingdom prove that to be persecuted and hated for its sake will be an occasion of rejoicing.

The reader who makes a real attempt to get rid of the effect of the printed page and of the traditions which come from generations of mole-eyed study and to think himself back into the circumstances of the first preaching of the Sermon on the Mount will easily see that this is the force of the Beatitudes.

16. Contrast with the World.—If our Lord intended to define anything, it was evidently not the type of character which was to be ultimately formed in men by the Kingdom, but the kinds of character, or rather of spiritual condition and attitude, which were fitted to receive the Kingdom. Therefore He speaks mainly of negative conditions, of needs, of sorrows and privations and persecutions. His mission was to the needy. Further, it is evident our Lord designed, here at the very beginning of His moral instruction, to make a marked contrast between His Kingdom and the kingdoms of the earth. The latter were for the proud and the rich and the violent. The poor, the meek, the merciful, the pure in heart, the peacemakers, had, as such, no place in them. Pagan civilisations, it must be remembered, were based on slavery and pagan empires on subject peoples. The mastery of the strong was a more oppressive element in human experience than now. Christ made it clear at the outset that His

Kingdom had a place and a blessing for all who were despised and forgotten in the Kingdoms of the world.

17. Conditions of Entry into the Kingdom.—He intended also, no doubt, to convey the truth, so often expressed by Him in other ways at other times, that those who are to enter the Kingdom and partake of its blessings must come as poor, as mourners, as meek-hearted, as hungering for spiritual blessing, as ready to forgive those who have sinned against them, as prepared to endure persecution for righteousness' sake. Here we have indeed another preaching of repentance as the true preparation for the Kingdom, as we have also the truth expressed by the invitation (Matt. xi. 28), "Come unto Me all ye that labour and are heavy laden and I will give you rest," and by the declaration that, to enter the Kingdom, men must become as little children.

18. The Beatitudes a Preparation.—The importance of this discussion of the Beatitudes consists in the fact that it enables us to gain the true point of view from which to consider our Lord's great ruling idea of the Kingdom. The section contains our Lord's own introductory address to those to whom He was about to declare the law of the Kingdom. It was intended as a preparation for all that was to follow. For us also, it is the best preparation.

19. Relation of the Kingdom to the World.—Having introduced the Kingdom as the supreme

blessing, Christ goes on to speak of its relation to the world at large. The Kingdom is a blessing to its members: it is also to be a blessing to the world. "Ye are the salt of the earth." "Ye are the light of the world." "Let your light shine before men that they may see your good works and glorify your Father which is in Heaven" (Matt. v. 13-16).

The Kingdom is not to be regarded as an order of things so utterly alien from the life of the world as to have no relation to it. On the contrary, the world depends for its very existence and continuance upon the relation which it has to the Kingdom. In a sense, the Kingdom exists in order to be a benefit to the world. If it loses its value to the world, it loses all its value. As salt purifies and preserves from corruption, so does the Kingdom purify and keep from utter loss the world in which it exists. If the members of the Kingdom lose that character which belongs to them as members, they become worthless, they lose that which gives them all their value. "If the salt have lost its savour, wherewith shall it be salted? It is thenceforth good for nothing but to be cast out and trodden under foot of men."

20. The Kingdom the Light of the World.—

The Kingdom is also like the light of the world. It is placed in the world in order to shine, and if it is not shining, it is failing in that which belongs to the purpose of its very being. A lamp is lighted, not that it may be covered up, but that it may be

placed on a stand so as to give light to all that are in the house. Even so, the members of the Kingdom are to let their light shine that the world may see and glorify their Father which is in Heaven. This second illustration brings out more clearly than the first the purpose for which the Kingdom exists in the world. It is intended to make men glorify God. That is, the Kingdom is a social organism which is to exist in the world and, by living its true natural life, is to bring the world into harmony with God. Let the members of the Kingdom be but true to their calling and they will become the means of converting the world and making the kingdoms of the earth to become the Kingdom of the Lord and of His Christ (Rev. xi. 15). Thus is the Kingdom to be in the world as a great world-transforming principle.

21. The Parables of Growth.—The truth thus briefly expressed in the Sermon is taught at greater length and viewed from different points of view in our Lord's later teaching, and especially in His parables. A whole cycle of parables deals with the "mysteries of the Kingdom of Heaven" (Matt. xiii. 11). Some teach that the Kingdom is to grow from small beginnings until it becomes a mighty power dominating the world. Such are the parables of the mustard seed (Matt. xiii. 31, 32), the leaven (Matt. xiii. 33), the seed growing secretly (Mark iv. 26-29). Others foretell that, in the process of growth, the evil will become mixed with the good

and that it is impossible for it to be otherwise while this world lasts. Such are the tares and the wheat (Matt. xiii. 24-30), and the draw-net (Matt. xiii. 47-50). It is clear that our Lord looked on into the future and saw His Kingdom at work among men, grappling with the evil and overcoming it, and gradually transforming humanity in preparation for the coming of a great epoch which is termed "the end of the world" (Matt. xiii. 39).

22. The Kingdom, Present and Future.—There has been much discussion as to whether Christ regarded His Kingdom as a thing altogether in the future, a thing not to be realised until "the end of the world," or as already existing and destined to continue and to grow through all the ages of human history. It is surely quite plain from what has been just pointed out that our Lord conceived His Kingdom in the latter way. For Him it was the light of the world, existing and shining in the world. It was the mustard seed which was to grow and become a tree. At the same time, there was a sense in which the Kingdom was to be regarded as a thing yet to come. Our Lord taught His people to pray continually "Thy Kingdom come" (see also Luke xxi. 31; Acts i. 6, 7, compared with Matt. xxiv. 36). And throughout His teaching there is the thought of a great final completion. The truth is, the Kingdom is sometimes regarded in its ideal perfection as the great end to which all things move, sometimes in that condition of imperfection, or partial realisation,

in which it actually exists in this imperfect world. As the former it is that for which we are to strive and pray continually, as the latter it is present amongst us wherever the spirit of Christ lives and works.

23. Continuity with the Old Order.—We have seen that our Lord looked on into the future and contemplated His Kingdom engaged in its secular conflict with evil until at last it is victorious and so attains perfection. Thus is the Kingdom seen in its relation to the world. But He also looked to the past and defined, in very exact terms indeed, the relation of the Kingdom to the old order. The section of the Sermon on the Mount which deals with this subject is perhaps the most detailed and systematic piece of ethical exposition which is to be found in all our Lord's teaching (Matt. v. 17-48). He was no nihilistic revolutionary. He did not come to condemn or destroy the order of the past. "Think not that I came to destroy the law or the prophets. I came not to destroy, but to fulfil" (Matt. v. 17). The Kingdom as set up on earth by Christ was not begun by a violent breach with the past, but by an orderly and legitimate development. "Till heaven and earth pass away, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass away from the law, till all things be accomplished."

24. Fulfilling the Law.—When our Lord speaks of coming to fulfil the law He uses words which would bear several interpretations. It is important

for us to understand His meaning. The expression might mean that He came in order to do the things which the law commanded, but the following verses which evidently contain the application of the principle laid down in verse 17 forbid this interpretation. The whole passage (Matt. v. 17-48) must be considered together. Verse 17 contains the general principle, the working of which is exhibited and illustrated in the several sections which follow. In these sections various laws and principles of the old order are passed in review and their fulfilment explained. In verses 19 and 20 we are taught that the old commandments, instead of being slighted in the Kingdom, are to be kept with a far truer observance than ever before. And then our Lord goes on to show what the nature of this observance is to be. It is to be of the spirit and not of the letter. The Kingdom will search the hearts of men. It will search the heart of the law also. It will draw out the inner meaning and deeper truth of the law. It will institute a moral order in which all that is in the law will find its more perfect realisation. In this sense it was that Christ came to fulfil the law. The Kingdom is then, in one way, no new thing. It is that for which the law and the prophets were preparing.

25. Historical Scope of the Conception.—When this view of the relation of the Kingdom to the old order is connected with the view which we have already attained of its relation to the future history

of the world, we are enabled to gain some insight into the scope of the conception which our Lord formed of His Kingdom. And how splendid is that conception: a great social order summing up the past, fulfilling the law and the prophets, growing and developing with all the future of human history, gathering in men of every kind and incorporating them in its life, not wholly escaping the evil, yet destined at last to an ideal perfection!

26. The Kingdom and the Nations.—The conception of the Kingdom which has thus grown up in our thoughts while we have been considering certain parts of our Lord's teaching concerning it requires further definition in some very important respects. During His ministry our Lord as a rule confined the sphere of His labours to the chosen country and the chosen people. "I was not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel" (Matt. xv. 24) was an answer He gave to the request of a Gentile. Nevertheless it is plain from several important passages that He intended His Kingdom to be universal. In Matt. viii. 11, 12, He says "Many shall come from the east and the west, and shall sit down with Abraham and Isaac and Jacob in the Kingdom of Heaven; but the sons of the Kingdom shall be cast into the outer darkness" (see also Luke xiii. 29). Here Gentiles are intended, as the latter clause of the passage clearly shows. Again, Matt. xxi. 43, "The Kingdom of God shall be taken from you and shall be given to a nation bringing forth the fruits

thereof"; John xii. 32, "I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto Myself"; Matt. xxviii. 19, "Go ye therefore, and make disciples of all the nations". But these passages only bring out more distinctly what is implied in the parables of the mustard seed, the leaven and the draw-net, and what is, after all, stated plainly enough in the words "The field is the world" (Matt. xiii. 38). Our Lord therefore designed His Kingdom to be universal, world-wide in its scope and sphere of operations. And this harmonises with the title which He chose for Himself and used more frequently than any other, the Son of Man.

27. The Kingdom as the *Summum Bonum*.— In the teaching of our Lord, the Kingdom is the highest good, the good to be desired above all others, the supreme blessing for the individual, for mankind, for the world, the end for which it is worth while to sacrifice everything else. This truth is conveyed in some of those parables which were specially intended to deal with the nature of the Kingdom. "The Kingdom of Heaven is like unto treasure hid in a field; the which when a man hath found, he hideth, and for joy thereof goeth and selleth all that he hath, and buyeth that field" (Matt. xiii. 44). "The Kingdom of Heaven is like unto a merchant man, seeking goodly pearls: who, when he had found one pearl of great price, went and sold all that he had and bought it" (Matt. xiii. 45, 46). With these parables must be connected a group of passages in

which our Lord identifies Himself with His Kingdom and claims for Himself the utmost devotion of which the soul is capable, demanding if need be the daily sacrifice of all that men hold dearest (see Matt. x. 37-39, xvi. 24-28; Mark viii. 34-38; Luke ix. 23-27, xiv. 26-33).

28. The *Summum Bonum* in the Sermon on the Mount.—The most important passage on this subject from our present point of view is in the Sermon on the Mount (Matt. vi. 19-34). This section seems to occupy a much more important position in our Lord's moral teaching than has usually been assigned to it. It has been generally regarded as an eloquent and beautiful passage conveying two lessons, a warning against mammon-worship and a warning against undue anxiety. Beyond this it has been felt by many to be rather a source of difficulty than anything else. Much relief was felt when the Revised Version substituted "Be not anxious" for "Take no thought". It was undoubtedly a helpful change to the many who were misled by their unfamiliarity with the old English phrase. But to suppose that it gets rid of the real difficulty of the passage is indeed strange. The true difficulty is, and always was, that the teaching seems to put man into a position which is either impossible or improper. The man who has others depending on him and who knows that he must exert himself to the utmost for them if they are even to live, and who knows also that the supply of material needs does not come to

him as it comes to birds and flowers, feels it an unreal thing to be told he is not to be anxious, because God will provide. On the other hand, for the person who is not compelled by necessity or the irresistible pressure of his social circumstances, is it not almost demoralising to be told that he need not be anxious, because God will provide for him as well as for the fowls of the air and the lilies of the field? Would not such teaching encourage indolence? Is not man different from birds and flowers just on this account, that his needs have to be supplied through the exercise of his own faculties of body and mind, and are not the anxieties of life part of the moral machinery devised by the Creator to make man live his life and exercise his faculties as he ought?

29. Inadequate Interpretation of the Passage.

—The truth seems to be that the usual interpretation is inadequate. And its inadequacy appears in several ways. The lesson taught, the warning against anxiety, is a small thing to occupy so great a space; for the space is very great. Considering the extraordinary concentration which marks the Sermon on the Mount and the ethical utterances of Christ generally, the proportion of the teaching to the quantity of language and imagery used is, on this view, very small. Further, the passage as a whole is the most beautiful and splendid in the Sermon, perhaps the most splendid in the whole range of our Lord's utterances. It also occupies a very central position,

a circumstance which may have some importance. Such a passage in such a position might well be expected to contain the central and sovereign thought of the whole of our Lord's moral teaching.

30. Pagan and Christian Morality.—It has often been said that Christian morality is too negative, that the ethical instruction imparted by Christian teachers deals too much in prohibitions. And there can be no doubt that as that instruction is often given there is too much of the "Thou shalt not" and not enough of the teaching which finds the moral life primarily in the positive exercise of the faculties in the right way. In form our Lord's teaching in the Sermon follows the Decalogue in being largely couched in negative terms, and in substance also it is prevailingly negative, with the exception of a few short sections (v. 13-16, 44-48), up to the nineteenth verse of the sixth chapter. In the great section with which we are now dealing, we have, in spite of the negative form, the great positive rule which covers the whole of life. Here we have a positive principle which in itself is quite sufficient to overthrow the objection that pagan morality was superior to Christian in that it provided active principles which bred heroes. To answer this objection it would be enough to point to history and show that Christian heroes have not been less active than pagan ones. But it is also important to point out at its source the principle which produced such a result.

31. How is the Work of Life to be done?—

There is no better test of a system of morals than its answer to the question: How is the average man to do his every-day duties? How is the work of life to be done? If a teacher of morals contents himself with negative precepts, prohibitions of sins, he omits the greater part of human life. Precisely the same thing happens if he devotes his whole attention to the heroics of morality. Most men spend the greater part of their time upon what is in the main their duty, and what they require is a principle to enable them to do this duty in the right way. It is not enough to say that to forbid the evil is to enjoin the good, that, for example, to forbid laziness is to enjoin diligence. For what is required is a positive principle, something to inspire the man's soul and to consecrate his toil. Man needs a motive which will enable him to be as true and as good in the doing of the commonest duties of the routine of his daily life as in the greatest act of self-denial.

32. Our Lord's Solution of the Problem.—There is a great section of the Sermon on the Mount which deals directly with the ordinary life and work of ordinary men and women and which tells us how that life is to be lived and that work to be done. Most men have to spend the greater part of their time and of their energy working with a view to their daily bread. How are they to make this great and inevitable expenditure in the right way? Our Lord does not shirk that question. He faces it directly and gives a clear answer. His answer is: First,

don't work for money, don't let your labour go for earthly rewards. "Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon the earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal: but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven." If you work for the earthly reward, you work for that which is essentially fugitive, for that which must perish. Work for the eternal. But there is a deeper reason. If your life is to be what it ought to be, it must be ruled by one great motive. Otherwise, there will be discord and failure. You must have a "single eye". "No man can serve two masters." If he attempts to do so, there will be fatal confusion. "Ye cannot serve God and Mammon."

33. Definition of the Motive.—When you decide to serve God and live for the eternal, confusion vanishes, you are lifted above anxiety. "*Therefore I say unto you, be not anxious for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment?*" God provides for the birds. God provides for the lilies. "Be not anxious therefore, saying, What shall we eat? or What shall we drink? or Wherewithal shall we be clothed?" That is the pagan way of living. "After all these things do the Gentiles seek." "Your Heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things. But *seek ye first His Kingdom and His righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.*"

34. Completeness of the Definition.—The whole passage, with its striking repetitions and its almost unexampled charm and splendour, leads up to a great and most complete definition of the ruling motive, the end to which the “single eye” is to be directed: The Kingdom and the righteousness of God. The definition is very complete, because it defines the end both objectively and subjectively, from the two opposite sides of conduct and of character. At a later stage we shall, perhaps, be able to understand this completeness of the definition better, when we have considered the ideal of character set before us by our Lord. For the present we shall confine our attention to the objective side of the end and think of *the Kingdom as the motive of conduct*.

35. Removal of the Difficulty.—When this great definition has been thrown into full relief the meaning of the whole passage becomes apparent and the difficulty, formerly so perplexing, vanishes. The lesson that we now learn is one that makes us see all the elements of human life in their true proportions. We are not to live for earthly ends and temporal rewards, whether they be the mere necessities of life, or wealth or fame or power or any other of the luxurious ends that worldly men have set before themselves. The true rule is: *Live for the Kingdom*. Seek the Kingdom and the necessities of life will come to you. Therefore you need not be anxious. And this is no impossible rule. It is the actual rule

of all true and noble living. No really good work was ever done by the man who worked for bread and butter, or for mere money. There is a kind of pictures which all true artists despise heartily. Such pictures are called "pot-boilers". Sportsmen despise a man who will shoot a bird sitting. They call it a "pot-shot". And what is true of small things is true of great things. The man who lives for money is always a degraded creature whether he be pedlar or millionaire. Truly good work of every kind is done from nobler motives. The worker has within him the conviction that what he is engaged upon has some absolute worth above and beyond its value in the market. If it were not for this conviction the work would be of inferior quality. There must be this absolute worth in the end sought or the man could not put forth his powers to the full. This is true of the statesman, the poet, the artist. It is also true of the humblest labourer. The man must work for something beyond and above his daily bread or his life is ignoble.

36. The Absolute Good.—The man who works in this way believes—perhaps without realising the nature of his belief—that the work which comes to him as his duty, the duty which lies close to his hand, waiting to be done, has for him some value of an absolute kind, beyond the immediate advantage which it yields in the way of money or reward. It is, for him, the *good*, the thing which it is *right* should be done. Now there is only one conception

of an absolute end which can justify this conviction, a conviction which every seriously minded person who thinks about it will find in his own heart. There is only one way of grouping and harmonising all the "goods" of all true workers. There is one splendid conception which, if it be sound, unifies the moral universe and shows that all true workers are seeking one and the same good. That conception is the thought of the *summum bonum*, the supreme good, the ultimate end, as a state of being in which the good of all is the good of each and the good of each the good of all. The ideal end of all true living is in fact a social universe in which each individual finds his realisation in the end which realises all. In other words, the *Kingdom of Love* is the true end of all good living.

37. Living for the Kingdom.—All true living then is living for the Kingdom. The man who does his duty in a faithful spirit, the duty which lies "nearest his hand," is living for the Kingdom, whether he be the labourer toiling at his appointed task, or the statesman engaged upon the high affairs of state, or the poet or prophet using to the best the gift that is in him. All, when they are true to the call of duty, are working for an end which they believe to possess absolute worth, and which will be found, at last, to resolve itself into the Kingdom of God. Good work is done by the man who says, "Here is a thing to be done. It is my work, the thing into which I am to put myself, in other words,

my duty, let me do it as well as I possibly can." And all such work is *for the Kingdom*.

38. Daily Bread.—The man who works in the way just described will always find that the necessities of life will come to him. Christ says, "Seek first the Kingdom and all these things—*i.e.*, the necessities of life—will be added unto you". So men who have tried it have ever found. The good worker does not lack bread. He does not live for bread, but the bread he requires to support his life comes to him.

39. Our Lord's Definition the Best.—The wonder and the glory of our Lord's teaching in the part of the Sermon with which we are now dealing (Matt. vi. 19-34) consist in the fact that He rises at once to the highest point of view and in a flash of revelation shows us the innermost truth of human life with all its labours and anxieties. He makes us see that God and Heaven are the real explanation of things here on earth. All that the best ethical philosophy of the nineteenth century laboured painfully to express is contained in this passage, but how much better said! We are here taught that the Kingdom of Love is the supreme end that men are to seek even in the commonest of their daily tasks. Also that, if they live in this way, they will be lifted above anxiety.

40. The Inner Truth of this Teaching.—But our Lord not only gives us the best definition of the ethical end, He also admits us into the inner reason of the thing. That reason is the love of the great

Father. The true worker is not only living in God's world, he is also doing God's will. God is the Father who provides for all His creatures. Let the worker go on in faith doing his work and living his life in accordance with the law of his being, and his Father in Heaven will not forget him. God provides for the birds and the lilies. They live according to the nature God has given them, and He supplies them with all that they need. If man lives according to that higher nature God has given him, if he obeys the law of his being, which is to live for the Kingdom, then the great Father will provide him also with all that he needs. Thus is anxiety removed. The argument is indeed of the kind which is termed *à fortiori*. Man's nature is higher than that of the birds or that of the lilies. "Are not ye of much more value than they?" How much more then is it certain that God will provide for you? Further, there is a process *à fortiori* in another respect. There are some things man has to depend absolutely upon God for. And these are the more essential things, the body, the life, the faculties man possesses. "Is not the life more than meat and the body than raiment?" And "Which of you by being anxious can add one cubit unto his stature?" Man cannot provide himself with the first essentials of his life. God gives them all. And the God who gives the life will supply also the means by which that life is to be sustained. But, for man, gifted as he is with a spiritual nature, possessing, that is, a spirit capable

of looking up to God as to a father, there is the condition that all this depends upon obedience to the great law which is to govern the whole practical life: Seek *first* the Kingdom. If that law be obeyed, there will be, for the believer in God, neither anxiety on the one hand, nor negligence or carelessness in work on the other.

41. This Teaching Explains all Goodness.—

The teaching of our Lord in this passage makes us understand the life and work of all good men from the beginning. Only He makes clear and explicit what is implicit, felt and acted upon, but not distinctly understood, in their lives. Wherever men live true lives and do good work the Kingdom is being sought, though often in a dim far-off imperfect manner. It is no small advantage of this teaching that it enables us thus to connect the simplest of duties and all that is truly good in the lives of men of all times and sorts with the Christian hope and the Christian view of the world. "Thy Kingdom come" is perhaps the petition which expresses most characteristically the active side of Christianity. It is the great missionary prayer of the Church offered continually throughout the ages. Yet it expresses at the same time the spirit of all true workers in all ages. And certainly all true work is a preparation for the Kingdom.

42. Modern Ethical Thought.—Modern thought is moving more and more definitely in the direction indicated by this teaching of our Lord. Ethics, it

is now recognised, is essentially concerned with social principles. The *social organism* is much discussed. The idea of *organic unity* as applied to society is regarded by many as the most illuminating of all ideas. Practically, all this means that society would be perfect and man's condition at its best if all persons were so related that each contributed to the realisation of all, and, in doing so, realised himself. And what is such a view but a dim vision of the Kingdom of God, that great social order set before us as an ideal by our Lord in which each member attains his personal blessedness by filling his proper station in the whole body in relation to the King above him, and to all the other members, his fellow-servants?

43. The Social Aspect of Human Life.—The effectiveness of Christianity in relation to the characteristic problems of the present day is mainly due to its mode of presenting this very conception. The Fatherhood of God; the brotherhood of men; the Kingdom as a social organism; the organic relation of God and man as expressed in the Incarnation; these are the elements of doctrine which Christian teachers find it necessary to dwell upon most frequently nowadays. Of recent years, all our principal thoughts concerning life—our ethical investigations, our theological controversies, our political discussions—have been moving round one centre, *the social aspect of human existence*.

44. Society and the Individual.—The Christian

way of putting the social view of human life rises above, and so completely overcomes, a difficulty which the secular expression of the same truth can neither escape nor conquer. Social community, when conceived merely scientifically, destroys the absolute value of the individual. The social organism lives on from age to age and grows in complexity and perhaps also in perfection, but the individuals which compose it perish. The man is sacrificed to society. The defect is, in truth, a fatal one, and it is hard to see how the scientific method can ever remedy it. But no such imperfection attaches to the Christian presentation of the same conception. For it each human being is a spirit having kinship with the Eternal Spirit. The individual is no mere element in an organic unity: he is a child of the great Father in Heaven. Every hair of his head is numbered. Therefore, though a member in the social organism, he is also possessed of an infinite and absolute value. He is not a creature produced in order that, by his perishing, the perfect society may, in the distant future, be brought about. On the contrary, society cannot be perfected unless the individuals who contributed to its perfecting are realised as ends in themselves in the perfection of the whole. The Kingdom is the family of God in which no member can be forgotten or ignored.

45. The Value of the Individual.—The last consideration introduces two very important subjects: the value of the human soul and immortality.

Christianity taught, in a manner which was new, and unexampled in its power to reach the mind of man, the infinite value of the individual. The parables of the lost sheep, the lost piece of money, and the prodigal son, the action of our Lord in setting the highest possible value on the very humblest and most despised of human beings, such expressions as "The very hairs of your head are all numbered," His way of putting the providence of God (Matt. vi. 26, 30), all taught the immeasurable worth of the individual. No one was too poor, too lowly, too degraded. Christ came to seek and to save the lost. This was the principle which worked among men until it finally overthrew those forms of civilisation which were built upon the subjection of whole races and classes. It is the doctrine which sends forth the missionary to the heathen and to the submerged populations of our great modern cities.

46. Immortality.—Closely connected with the value of the individual is the subject of the future life. No one is to be regarded as a means to the gratification of another. Every one is an end in himself, absolutely precious. He is a child of the great Father, and even though he be a prodigal, he is yet an object of the Father's loving care. The Kingdom is not therefore to be sought as an end without respect to the members of it. Its very nature as an end is that, in its perfection, each member is to be perfected. It is the Kingdom of Love, the family of the great Father. It is eternal

because God is eternal, and in its eternity all its members have their immortality. On this subject our Lord's teaching is quite clear. There must be a future life for men, because God calls Himself their God. "He is not the God of the dead, but of the living" (Mark xii. 27, see also Matt. xxii. 31 ff. and Luke xx. 37 ff.). That is, God cares for men, He loves them, He is their God; therefore He cannot leave them to perish. The great Father will never forsake His children.

47. Other Expressions of Moral Truth—Law.

—It may perhaps assist to the understanding of our whole position to point out that the ways of representing duty which have been most common amongst us resolve themselves, when worked out and properly apprehended, into the way to which we have been led above. "Obey the law" is the form in which moral instruction is generally imparted first. So children are taught. So was Israel taught. This method corresponds to a stage in development through which the race and the individual must necessarily pass. But our Lord taught us that it is only a stage. It is not the final truth. Law must be resolved into love. The highest law, which includes all other laws, is the *Law of Love*. But here a mistake is often made. Love is no mere abstract thing. It cannot exist apart from a community of spirits among whom to exist. Now wherever there is love, in the ethical sense, there the Kingdom of God is to some degree realised (see Rom. xiv. 17).

That Kingdom will be perfected "in the great day". But it exists on earth at present wherever souls are living in the right relation to one another. And so when the language of affection is translated into the language of Christian ethical thought, the words "living in accordance with the law of love" find their equivalent in the words "living for the Kingdom".

48. Conscience.—Again, we are taught to obey *conscience*. This also is one of the forms into which the moral command can and must be thrown. Every appeal to the human heart on behalf of the good and the right is an appeal to conscience. When our Lord said, "Seek first the Kingdom of God," He appealed to the consciences of His hearers. The primary element in conscience is that conviction that there is a good to be aimed at, a duty to be done, which belongs to man's very constitution as a spiritual being. This is the sense of the absolutely worthy in human life.

But there can be little doubt that, in English ethical thought, too much has been made of conscience. It is common to hear conscience spoken of as the ultimate court of appeal in all moral questions, and as the basis of the whole distinction between good and bad. The psychology of conscience is sometimes regarded as the whole of ethics. It would be impossible to enter here into a full discussion of this question. It will probably be sufficient to point out that, if conscience is the final arbiter, the question must be asked, Whose conscience? Consciences

differ: Which conscience is the standard? Of course, the answer which is always made is, that conscience, like every other faculty, requires to be trained in order to be brought to perfection. Every individual conscience is more or less faulty, but all consciences tend to approximate to a type. That type is the standard. This is true and very important, but can hardly be said to prove the point in question. The answer surely is obvious that, if conscience requires training in order to be perfected, then the ultimate standard is to be found, not in the conscience, but in the authority which trains it. And what is that authority? It is the Kingdom of God. Only as a member of the social universe does any man ever obtain for his conscience a proper training. And the social universe in which the man has his place is, in so far as it is capable of giving to the consciences of its members a right training, to be regarded as a partial realisation of the Kingdom.

49. The Ultimate Moral Standard.—The truth is that the ultimate standard in morals is to be found, not in conscience, but in the absolute end, the end at which all good conduct aims, that is, the social universe made perfect, the Kingdom of Love, the Kingdom of God in its perfection. This is the great ideal which dominates the whole process of the moral world, and which will find its full realisation “in the great day”. The result of our investigations is then that, when the two most familiar ways of presenting duty are examined, they resolve themselves into the

principle laid down by our Lord, "Seek ye first the Kingdom of God".

50. The Church and the Kingdom.—It may be thought that the Kingdom is here regarded in too wide a manner. There are many who hold strongly that the Kingdom must be identified with the organised Church, and therefore, it may be contended, cannot be treated as the moral ideal, or considered to be operative as a moral principle wherever and whenever men lead good lives. It would be quite impossible to enter here into a discussion of "Church principle". The relation between the moral and the ecclesiastical ideals is a great subject, but it is not within the scope of our study at present. It is plain, from the institution of the sacraments if from nothing else, that our Lord designed His Kingdom to take shape as an organised religious community. But it is also plain that He presented the Kingdom as a moral ideal. And further, we know that Christ is the "light which lighteth every man" (John i. 9), and where Christ is there is some realisation of the Kingdom. But it is not necessary to discuss the question further, for in the last resort the moral and ecclesiastical ideals become identical; that is, the absolute end to which the organised Church is moving and the absolute end to which all human society, in so far as it is subject to morality, is moving, are one and the same: the Kingdom of God in its perfection, the universe of love. When this is seen it becomes evident how supreme is the position given by our

Lord to the conception of the Kingdom, how completely it dominates His ethical teaching on its objective side.

51. Community.—It must be clear now that the moral ideal set before us by our Lord is one which is essentially social. This character depends, as we are now in a position to see, on its involving the principle of community. By community is not here meant the holding of all material wealth in common. That system of social organisation, though tried by the Christian Church in the beginning of its history, is not a necessary consequence of the doctrine with which we are now engaged. The doctrine before us is simply that the true good is a common good, it is one and the same for all. It is an end which should be sought by all persons alike. No one has a right to claim it for himself and to attempt to exclude others. All have to be considered equally. The Kingdom is a great family in which all are united under the common Fatherhood of God. Every member is to identify his own good with the good of the whole and with the good of each.

52. This Principle in our Lord's Teaching.—This principle is constantly applied by our Lord and in a variety of ways. It is implied in the golden rule that we should do to others as we would they should do to us. It appears in that method of moral self-criticism so often inculcated by the great Teacher. For example (Matt. vii. 1-4),

when our Lord warns us against the critical spirit He teaches that if we judge we shall be judged, and then goes on to show that people who adopt the critical tone are themselves open to criticism. "Why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother's eye, but considerest not the beam that is in thine own eye?" "Thou hypocrite, cast out first the beam out of thine own eye; and then shalt thou see clearly to cast out the mote out of thy brother's eye." The principle all through is the one now under consideration. We are so united, so bound together, that we cannot deal with others without being dealt with by them in return. If we judge we shall be judged, both by God and by man. If we condemn, we shall be condemned. And why? Because evil is common as well as good. If we become fault-finders we become hypocrites, because there is fault in ourselves as well as in others, and we dare to isolate ourselves, to set ourselves on high above others, forgetting that we share their life and are one with them in their imperfections (see Luke vi. 37, 38). A true realisation of our position will lead rather to humility, a virtue the loveliness of which was first revealed to man in the person, and by the teaching, of the Lord Jesus.

NOTE TO CHAPTER II. (See p. 7).

The Kingdom as Spiritual.—The whole conception of the Kingdom as presented by our Lord is spiritual as opposed to the worldly conception current among the Jews. The Kingdom is spiritual, because it consists in a relation of human souls to God and to one another, a relation which is best expressed by the word *Love*. But there are many who attach quite a different meaning to the term “spiritual” when it is used to describe the Kingdom. They think it means that the Kingdom consists in some “inner light” seen only by each believer in the depths of his own soul, some divine revelation imparted to the inner consciousness of the individual as his own peculiar and exclusive possession. This view is supposed to be justified by the expression (Luke xvii. 21), “The Kingdom of God is within you”.

On this it is necessary to note (1) that the translation “within you” is not free from uncertainty, because the Greek can with equal propriety be rendered “among you,” and this rendering is made probable by the fact that the words were addressed to the Pharisees, in whom the Kingdom could hardly be said to be; and (2) that even if the translation “within you” be adopted, the expression need not mean a mystical illumination of the kind described above, but may just as fittingly refer to the principle of love, which though truly within the soul is yet a bond of social union.

It is not, of course, denied that the Kingdom brings spiritual illumination to the soul that enters into it. Such illumination is one of its most blessed results. What is meant is that our Lord does not teach us to regard this inner light as the essence of the Kingdom. When He says “Seek the Kingdom” He does not mean “Seek the inner light”. On the contrary, He bids us seek a blessing which is common to all, a universal blessing. The inner light is then to be regarded as a consequence of the coming of the Kingdom to each soul, and not as itself the Kingdom (see p. 7).

CHAPTER II.

THE PURE HEART.

1. **Inwardness.**—"Blessed are the pure in heart," said the Lord, "for they shall see God." The idea expressed in this Beatitude is one of the most fundamental in the moral teaching. Here its importance is emphasised by the glorious promise given to the pure in heart. Our Lord was, in no part of His teaching, more clear or more forcible than in His insistence upon the necessity of being good from the heart outwards. An external morality, an observance of the letter of the law, a rigid performance of all the actions and ceremonies commanded, these things had for Him no value apart from inward goodness of the heart. The Pharisees were notorious for their mechanical morality. If a man kept the law, as they understood it, in strict obedience of an outward kind, they asked no more. The result was the characteristic Pharisaic hypocrisy. Men became as "whited sepulchres," "outwardly beautiful, inwardly full of dead men's bones, and of all uncleanness" (see Matt. xxiii.). Therefore it was that Christ said "except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye

shall in no wise enter into the Kingdom of Heaven”.

2. Prophetic and Philosophic Anticipations.—

The truth which was thus powerfully enforced by our Lord was not altogether new. Great Prophets and Psalmists had seen it. Jeremiah especially had foretold the coming of a dispensation marked by a law written by God in the hearts of His people. “This is the covenant that I will make with the House of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my law in their inward parts, and in their heart will I write it; and I will be their God and they shall be My people” (Jer. xxxi. 33). Also the Psalmist had prayed, “Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me”. Among pagans also there had been those who had discerned something of the importance of the inward moral condition. Greek philosophers had taught that it was necessary for a man first *to be* and then *to do*. But our Lord taught this principle so forcibly and exhibited so distinctly its power to deepen the received code that He was able to alter the popular conception of the moral ideal. He gave to the whole world what had hitherto been the possession of inspired thinkers or specially cultured souls.

3. Inwardness of Evil.—

It is important to notice that this principle of the heart as the true seat of morality is exhibited by our Lord with reference to evil as well as to good. “Not that which entereth into the mouth defileth the man [referring to the

Jewish ceremonial cleansings]; but that which proceedeth out of the mouth, this defileth the man" (Matt. xv. 11). "The things which proceed out of the mouth come forth out of the heart; and they defile the man. For out of the heart come forth evil thoughts" (vv. 18, 19) and all kinds of evil deeds. Again (Luke vi. 45), "The good man out of the good treasure of his heart bringeth forth that which is good; and the evil man out of the evil treasure bringeth forth that which is evil: for out of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaketh" (see also Matt. xii. 34, 35).

4. Deepening the Law.—Our Lord did not abolish the old law. He fulfilled it. He penetrated to the inner meaning and deeper truth which underlay it. He showed men that, instead of coming for the purpose of removing the restrictions imposed by the Mosaic commandments, He was going to give to those very commandments a far more searching and thorough character. He would demand a righteousness exceeding the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees. How it is that this more exacting law escapes being a grievous bondage, as the Mosaic law as interpreted by the scribes and Pharisees became (see Matt. xxiii. 4), will appear when we come to consider our Lord's teaching on its more distinctively religious side. We are now concerned with the examples by which He showed how the application of the principle of inwardness to each law fulfils it, brings out, that is, its deeper truth and makes it a far more searching

test of human life. These examples are valuable as illustrating the principle and making its meaning clear. They are more valuable still as vivid appeals to the conscience to recognise and respond to the moral truth and power of the Lord's teaching. They are also an instruction in the method by which every soul is to make its own applications of the principle.

5. Examples.—As this little book is not a commentary on the "Teaching of Jesus," it would be impossible to take and examine in detail the five, or perhaps six, examples given by our Lord in the great passage of the Sermon on the Mount contained in Matt. v. 21-48. The first two examples deal with commandments taken word for word from the Decalogue, the commandments which forbid murder and impurity. The third, if it may be so described, arises out of the second. It discusses the Jewish law of divorce. The fourth refers less directly than the first and second to the Decalogue, but is, in effect, a comment on the third of the Ten Commandments. It expounds the law of oaths, and enjoins truthfulness and simplicity of speech. The fifth and sixth examples deal with admitted principles of the Jewish law, the former of which, the law of retaliation, is frequently laid down in the Pentateuch; and the latter, the rule for the treatment of enemies, is given in a form which, though not scriptural, was no doubt current among the rabbinical expositors.

6. Further Examination of the Examples.—The two first examples show most forcibly that, in the

Kingdom, the law is to be kept in the heart as well as in the outward conduct. As regards the law forbidding murder, our Lord's teaching is thrown by St. John (1 John iii. 15) into a single sentence, "He that hateth his brother is a murderer". Exactly similar is the treatment of the law of purity. In the other examples our Lord penetrates rather into the heart of the law itself than into that of its subjects. He traces the oath to its source; He shows there is a better retaliation than the "eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth"; He reveals the boundlessness of love. Thus our Lord deepens the law, and arrives at higher laws, or rather principles, which are to guide us in our application of the law to life.

7. Desire.—The principle of the pure heart is often found puzzling. Is the presence of an evil thought in the mind, or of an evil desire in the heart, in itself a sin? The answer must be negative. If the evil thought or desire were itself sinful, it would be impossible to be tempted without sin. Temptation does not really begin until the power of desire makes itself felt. Temptation presupposes desire, it must appeal to something in the heart or it would not be temptation. But sin does not begin until the desire is yielded to. It is often forgotten however that it is possible to yield to a desire without carrying it into outward action. It can be yielded to in the sense of allowing it to take possession of the heart and remain there as a welcome guest, though fear of consequences or physical difficulties may prevent

it bearing fruit in action. Yielding to desire, in this sense, is sinful; it is indeed the source of all sin. For, when the fear of consequences passes away or the physical difficulties are removed, the evil deed will surely be done. Therefore, although the presence of an evil desire is not in itself sinful, the yielding to it, even though it does not lead immediately to evil action, is sinful.

8. The Good Will.—We thus learn that good and evil are to be found, not so much in the outward conduct, as in the condition of the heart. This is the doctrine which modern ethics expresses when it declares that the goodness or badness of conduct depends upon the *motive*. The German philosopher Kant stated the same truth in another way when he said: "Nothing can possibly be conceived in the world, or even out of it, which can be called *good* without qualification, except a *Good Will*". The *will* here means that moral condition of the heart which issues naturally in action. It means a determination of the moral being towards some end. It does not mean mere feeling or wish. There are some who think that all is well when they have good feelings or when they are conscious of good wishes. But this is an error. Unless the feeling or wish takes definite shape as a determination of "Will," it is not truly worthy of being called *good*. Our Lord, though He lays so much stress on the heart, is as distinct on the importance of "doing" the right as is the law of Moses. The final lesson

of the Sermon on the Mount is concerned with that side of the truth. "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the Kingdom of Heaven, but he that doeth the will of My Father which is in Heaven." And the warning is emphasised by the addition of one of the most impressive of parables (Matt. vii. 24-27).

9. Motive and Conduct.—The motive is then that upon which the moral quality of conduct as good or bad depends. In order that we may be clear as to what we mean by this statement, we must think a little more about the nature of the will and the relation of motive to action. In every action or tendency to action, the agent is seeking some *end*. There is something he wishes to gain by his action, something he aims at. The agent directs himself towards the end he seeks. This direction of himself is the act of will. Now he wants to satisfy himself by gaining the end; and it is because he wants to satisfy himself in that way that he exerts his will. Here the motive comes in. It is the thing which moves the man, the thing which drives him on to action. Its nature is therefore clear. It is indeed the *end* as he thinks about it. What moves the man to action is just the fact that there is a thing which, when he thinks of it, makes him determined to gain it. His idea of this thing, or rather of this thing as gained by him and satisfying him, is then, strictly speaking, the motive.

10. Feelings.—Very often people speak of feelings as motives. The reason is that when a man wants to gain some end he has usually a certain amount of feeling about it. Sometimes the feeling becomes very strong, perhaps overpowering, so that he forgets everything else. The truth is that the feeling enters largely into the motive, but is not the real essence of the motive. It seems to be the essence of the motive, because many of the ends men long for yield, when they are gained, a great deal of pleasure. It is inevitable therefore that motives are often spoken of in terms of feeling. But even the sweetest and noblest feelings do not of themselves go to the heart of things. They are like sunbeams shining on the earth, so beautiful that you can think of nothing else, but requiring the solid substantial ground beneath to make their beauty evident.

11. Love as the Motive.—The Christian motive is often described as love. This is quite correct. It is also one of the most important expressions of the truth. It appeals in a peculiar way to the heart. But love here must mean more than mere feeling, more than the emotion so called. The emotion is the sunshine, the underlying ground is the relation into which God and the souls of men are brought. Love in the Christian sense exists in the Divine family, the family of which God is the Father. We have already dealt with the Christian motive in another form. It is expressed by the maxim

“Seek first the Kingdom of God”. The rule more immediately under consideration at present may be put thus: “Live by love”. Now these two maxims are simply two different ways of expressing the same truth. They present two different aspects of the same great ruling motive. One holds up the objective side of the motive, the other the subjective. One says “Seek the Kingdom of Love,” the other “Let love prevail and the Kingdom will come”. The two are identical in spirit and in aim. For where love truly prevails it tends to bring men under the dominion of God’s love and so to realise the Kingdom. Therefore our Lord sums up all particular motives which aim at the good under the one supreme head of Love. He teaches that if we love God and love our brother all commandments will be obeyed.

12. Forgiveness.—We can now understand clearly the peculiar way in which our Lord presents the duty of forgiving those who offend against us. “Lord,” inquired an apostle (Matt. xviii. 21), “how oft shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? until seven times? Jesus saith unto him, I say not unto thee, Until seven times; but, Until seventy times seven.” The same boundless, Divine application of the principle of love appears in the treatment of the law of retaliation (Matt. v. 38-42) and of the law relating to enemies (Matt. v. 43-48). In the one case we are taught to overcome evil with good, to let love for the offender overwhelm him and

his opposition in its beneficent flood. In the other case the example of the great Father is quoted to show that it is the nature of the highest love to pour its benediction on the evil and on the good, on the just and on the unjust. The imperative necessity of the forgiveness of injuries is impressed upon us by our Lord in a very striking manner. Over and over again He teaches that they who refuse forgiveness to their fellows shall be refused forgiveness by the Lord of all. "If ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses" (Matt. vi. 15). The lesson is taught even more powerfully in the parable of the unforgiving servant (Matt. xviii. 23-35, see also Mark xi. 25, 26). The reason of this surely is that forgiveness must be the expression of love. It springs from love and aims at love. It seeks the Kingdom. It therefore cannot be where is its negation, the spirit of unforgiveness or selfishness like that of the unforgiving servant.

13. Love your Enemies.—The command to love our enemies has often seemed to demand from men what men are unable to give. It has seemed unreal to many. But this mistake occurs because we form an imperfect conception of love. We think of it too exclusively as an emotional affection. Love possesses emotions, but, as we have already seen, these emotions do not constitute its essence, nor is their intensity the measure of its reality. For our present purpose we may describe love as the giving away of self to others, to God and to our fellows. It proves

its reality by what it does, gives, suffers for the sake of others. It denies self that others may be blessed. It may not feel any strong emotional affection for those for whom it gives so much. But its truth is shown by what it gives rather than by what it feels. Such will most certainly be the love which seeks the good of its enemies. This way of putting the case harmonises exactly with the teaching of our Lord in the Sermon on the Mount: "Love your enemies, and pray for them that persecute you; that ye may be the sons of your Father which is in Heaven: for He maketh His sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sendeth rain on the just and the unjust". Here the love of God is proved by His gifts. And surely the lesson is that the kind of love God would have us display towards our enemies is love of the same kind, the love which gives whatever gifts the circumstances of each occasion may show to be needful, whatever gifts we see will most truly convey blessing to those who hate or ill-use us.

CHAPTER III.

THE GREAT EXAMPLE.

1. Two Sides of the Moral Ideal.—The moral ideal may be exhibited as an ideal of conduct or an ideal of character according as we regard it from the outer or inner sides. The ideal of conduct has been examined in chapter i. Our conduct is ever to aim at the Kingdom: we are to live for the Kingdom. That great social conception is to rule our actions, to supply the supreme motive.

Our Lord also very clearly sets before us an ideal of character. The moral life, as described by Him, may be represented either as a life which seeks the Kingdom or as a life which aims at producing a certain type of character in the agent. We are to think, not merely of the great end we seek, but of what we ourselves are to become. We are not only to do, we are also to be.

2. Relation of the Two Ideals.—It has just been stated that it is, in truth, the same ideal which is thus regarded from two different sides, that the two ideals, those of conduct and character, are really the same in the last resort. It is, perhaps, well that this should be more distinctly shown. When the

Kingdom is described as the ideal of conduct, it is not meant that we are to aim at the Kingdom as a great far-off Divine event altogether out of relation to the present. That perfect far-off realisation of the Kingdom is, strictly speaking, *the Ideal*. It is the *ultimate* end. But the ideal is realised partially in every good action. There is a sense in which the Kingdom of God comes whenever the Spirit of God prevails in human life. The Kingdom of God is among us. It is, on the one hand, the Divine idea or plan which is even now controlling all the process of the universe, and it is, on the other, actually, though imperfectly, existing in the social and religious life of this earth of ours. Now, corresponding to every partial realisation of the Kingdom among men in the present state of things, there is some degree of good character in the persons who share in the realisation. There is an inner state of being in each soul to match the outer relation in which that soul stands to others. And the degree of realisation which the Kingdom has in every case might be measured by the inner state as well as by the outer relationship. And as the Kingdom will come by the bringing about a social condition more and more in conformity with the great design, so will it correspondingly come by the bringing about a state of character in each soul more and more in conformity with the perfect ideal of character.

3. The Ideal of Character.—The ideal of character is plainly declared by our Lord to be the great

Father Himself. The very name "Father" is emphasised by Christ to bring out this truth more forcibly. "Love your enemies and pray for them that persecute you; that ye may be sons of your Father which is in Heaven; for He maketh His sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sendeth rain on the just and the unjust" (Matt. v. 45). The teaching is, "Be sons of your Father," be like unto God. This statement of the ideal is even more explicitly made in the forty-eighth verse: "Ye therefore shall be perfect as your heavenly Father is perfect". That we have here an expression of the ideal which we are to set before us for imitation is surely obvious. To realise at once in each Christian character the perfection of God would, of course, be impossible. The meaning is rather: "Let that perfection be ever before you as your standard; let nothing lower satisfy you". It seems, perhaps, to be too great a demand to make upon flesh and blood. To speak to sinful men and say, "Be perfect as God," may seem to be lost labour, humanity being what it is. But all realisation of good character in human creatures is, so far as it goes, an imitation of God, a reproduction of the Divine. Goodness of character is always a following of God, though it be a very long way off. When it is understood that what our Lord is setting before us in this passage is the great ideal of all perfection of character, the difficulty vanishes.

4. The Incarnation of the Ideal.—God is then the ideal of character. But such an ideal, even

though it may be accepted as the ultimate truth, will seem to many too difficult of application to every-day life to be of much practical use. True, our Lord shows by an example how the principle may be applied. But, even in spite of the example, it must be admitted that, if we had to depend on the teaching alone, the ideal would remain too remote, too vast, too vague, to be easily applicable to our daily needs. It must be remembered that this particular side of Christ's moral teaching is to be found in His life and conduct quite as much as (perhaps even more than) in His teaching. He not only presented the ideal to us in words, He set it before us as a concrete reality. He is Himself the Incarnation of the Ideal. The moral influence of the life and death of our Lord on the world is incalculable. Just by being what He was He elevated human character. He revealed to men a moral beauty which, if not new in all its elements, was at least made visible in a manner so new as to be a veritable revelation. Above all, He was in His own person a demonstration of the moral truth of that teaching which exalts love to the supreme place. He made the world see what certainly it had never seen before, that love is greatest and most God-like when it stoops to the lowliest. He exhibited before Heaven and earth the truth of the profound reflection of the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews (ii. 10), that "*it became Him, for whom are all things, and through whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the author*

of their salvation perfect through sufferings". And so it is not surprising to find St. Paul in his application of the example of Christ dwelling on this particular aspect of the ideal. "Have this mind in you, which was also in Christ Jesus; who, being in the form of God, counted it not a prize to be on an equality with God, but emptied Himself, taking the form of a servant, being made in the likeness of men; and being found in fashion as a man, He humbled Himself, becoming obedient even unto death, yea, the death of the cross" (Phil. ii. 5-8). Our Lord preached Himself, not only as King and Saviour, but also as example. In the great invitation (Matt. xi. 29) He says, "Take My yoke upon you, and learn of Me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls". Again (John xiii. 15), "I have given you an example, that ye also should do as I have done to you". And (John xv. 12), "This is My commandment, that ye love one another even as I have loved you" (see also John xiii. 34-35).

5. Change Effected by the Example of Christ.—

It is very hard to understand how vast is the change effected by the teaching and example of our Lord in the general conception of the ideal character. After so many centuries of Christian history, it is practically impossible for us to think ourselves back into the thoughts of the pre-Christian age. This difficulty is increased by the fact that our ideals have been more improved than our practice. To gain some

idea of the change brought about by our Lord, it would be necessary to obtain a portrait of the ancient ideal drawn by some master-hand and then compare it with Jesus Christ. And fortunately there is such a portrait, drawn too by the hand of one of the world's great teachers. Aristotle gives, in his *Ethics*, a wonderfully striking picture of the "Great-souled man". Noble and virtuous with the splendid but imperfect nobility and virtue of pagan Greece, the great-souled man is proud, self-satisfied and pompous. His very "greatness," as conceived by Aristotle, makes him a poor creature when placed beside our Lord Jesus Christ. The fault was not in Aristotle, nor in the civilisation which he represents. The world did not know true greatness, as it knows it now, until Christ came. Our Lord held up the true ideal before the eyes of men. He made it to be a living reality.

6. Practical Application of the Ideal.—In the passage (Matt. v. 43-48) which contains the clearest statement of the doctrine that God Himself is the ideal of character, the principle is applied to the solution of a particular problem. How are enemies to be treated? "Thou shalt love thy neighbour and hate thine enemy" was an admitted rule in the ancient world. It was hard for men, especially for men like the Jews who prided themselves on their exclusiveness, to adopt any other rule. But Christ teaches that the problem must be solved, not by prejudice or passion, not by custom or the law of

the past, but by reference to the ultimate standard of character. Look at God and see how boundless, how unprejudiced, is His love. He bestows His benefits on the evil as well as on the good, on those who are opposed to Him, as well as on those who love Him. He is kind to "the unthankful and evil" (Luke vi. 35). Thus our Lord, in this great passage, not only solves a particular problem, but gives a principle and teaches a method by which all such problems are to be solved. The principle and method may both be expressed in the one word "love". Here is the truth taught so impressively by St. John, "Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God; and every one that loveth is begotten of God, and knoweth God. He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love" (1 John iv. 7, 8).

7. Central Position of the Principle of Love.—

The principle of Love occupies a very central position in the moral teaching of Christ. It forms the bond which unites all the elements of that teaching together and so creates a harmonious whole. When thinking of the objective side of the moral ideal, we were led to the great ruling conception of the Kingdom, and found that that Kingdom must be conceived as the Kingdom of Love in which each contributes to the blessing of all and in doing so is himself blessed. When we turned from the outer side to the inner, and thought first of the motive and then of the character of the citizens of the Kingdom, we found that both motive and character may be called

love. Conduct which seeks the Kingdom is precisely the same thing as conduct which is motivated by love. If it seems otherwise, then there is some deep error in the will. It is directed, not truly to the Kingdom, but to some imperfect conception of the Kingdom or to some end altogether different. And as to character, we have just seen that God Himself, more distinctly God as manifested in Christ, is the great example to which good character must ever more and more approximate. In this case our Lord, in setting before us the ideal, so applies the principle it yields as to bring out the fact that the supreme characteristic is love. Further, our Lord in teaching concerning moral commandments sums them all up under the head of love, love to God and love to man. Thus, as has been said, the principle of love is the bond which unites all parts of our Lord's moral teaching together. Its moral value corresponds to its position in the universe. There, we are taught, it is supreme, for "God is love".

8. Who is My Neighbour?—This reflection leads suitably to the consideration of a characteristic element in the moral teaching of our Lord. What is to be the scope of love? Or, to put the question as it was put to our Lord Himself, "Who is my neighbour?" If we are to love our neighbours as we love ourselves, it becomes a very serious question how far this principle is to extend. The answer has been already given. It is contained in the passage (Matt. v. 43-48) which has occupied so much of our atten-

tion. Our love is to be, like God's, a blessing for all who need it, for the evil and the good, the just and the unjust. This answer is given more distinctly in the parable with which our Lord replied to the question of the lawyer. The "Good Samaritan" teaches that all men without exception have a claim upon us. To enforce this lesson, Christ selected as the hero of His parable a man belonging to a race hated and despised by the Jews. And to the Jewish inquirer He makes this Samaritan stand as a type of the kind of goodness which God would have us cultivate. There was an exquisite wisdom in this choice of the Samaritan to be the benefactor of the parable. Why not have made a Jew assist a Samaritan or even a Gentile in order to show what the true child of God should be like? But Christ wished to teach by an example appealing rather to the *humanity* than to the national feelings of His hearer. And so He placed the Jew in the parable in a position of extreme need. That need did not stir the compassion of the priest and the Levite, who might have been expected to care for their brother by race and religion. But it appealed to the heart of one who was an alien, hated and despised by the Jews. Such mercy shown by a Jew to a Samaritan might have seemed an act of condescension, a work of supererogation. Shown by a Samaritan to a Jew, the true character of the goodness it reveals becomes, from the Jewish point of view, far more evident. Here Christ teaches that love is universal in its nature.

It cannot be bound by the limits imposed by race, or religion, or privilege. It must break down all such barriers if it is truly to prevail among men.

9. The Universality of Love.—The wide sweep of morality in its social character as revealed in this teaching is a matter of the utmost importance. Here we have our Lord giving us the final stage in a great process. All morality implies that the individual identifies his own personal good with the good of others. Thus is morality the principle of cohesion in human society. Apart from some degree of goodness, society could not hold together for a moment. Men must be able to trust one another to some extent or they could not live or act together. They trust one another because they recognise a common good. In certain primitive states of society this common good seems to belong to the family or tribe. Those who are outside the magic circle seem to the members of it to be outside the pale of moral consideration. In more advanced social organisations the common good extends to the city, the nation, or the church. Christ taught us that we are to identify our good with the good of all, that no soul is to be cut off from our love. In this teaching it is plain He made the very widest extension possible of the area of the common good.

10. Summary of Results.—Having reached this conclusion; we can make an important summary of results. We can now see clearly that our Lord sets before us in their simplest but most comprehensive

and impressive forms the leading principles of an *absolute* morality. The ideal is viewed by Him from the objective side as the Kingdom, a perfect social order in which every soul is to find its blessedness. The Kingdom is, in its ultimate form, the end to which, under the guidance of God, all that goes on in the world is being directed. It is also the ideal end at which all are to aim. The Kingdom is also viewed as a present thing, actually existing among men wherever there is faith and love and goodness, wherever the Spirit of Christ is. Now this is, in truth, the very conception of the ethical standard which is, more and more, coming to prevail at the present day. In its philosophical form it is the outcome of long criticism of life and reflection. But here we find it all more simply and more persuasively put by our Lord. And by Him it is given in a way by which it escapes entanglement in the complexities of metaphysical discussion.

11. Summary Continued — Character. — The ideal of character given by Christ is equally absolute. God Himself is to be our standard. Here our Lord's teaching goes far beyond the teaching of the ethical philosophers. For while they employ themselves giving lists of the virtues, He shows us the principle of love as the essential characteristic of the Divine Nature. And, more potent still, He gives in His own Person and life an example which has revolutionised our conception of moral greatness and been an inspiration to all noble souls ever since.

12. Summary—The Sphere of Love.—Lastly, He has set before us the absolute ideal of the extension of the sphere of love. Love is to be universal in its operation. It is to claim all men as its own. The good we are to seek is a good which is common to all, from which none are excluded. We are to love our neighbours as ourselves and to count among our neighbours men of every tribe and nation and form of belief. All are to be included in the blessing we seek.

CHAPTER IV.

LIFE AND GROWTH.

1. **Sin.**—None ever taught with such awful impressiveness and solemnity the dreadfulness of sin as did our Lord. In many passages this teaching is conveyed rather by the tone and manner of His address than by direct statements about the nature of sin. Such, for example, is the great passage in which the relation of the new law to the old is discussed (Matt. v. 17-48). We have already considered this passage from another point of view. It is sufficient now, in connection with the subject before us, to point out that it is impossible to read the words in which Christ taught that in His Kingdom all the old laws would be deepened without being made to feel that He was all the while revealing the profound importance of goodness and the awfulness of sin as they had never been revealed before. In other places our Lord gives the same teaching about sin by means of certain great and very terrible warnings. It is better to die miserably than to commit certain offences. "Whosoever shall cause one of these little ones that believe on Me to stumble, it were better for him if a great millstone were hanged

about his neck, and he were cast into the sea" (Mark ix. 42). Let any sacrifice, no matter how great, be made rather than permit sin to gain the mastery. "If thine hand cause thee to stumble, cut it off: it is good for thee to enter into life maimed, rather than having thy two hands to go into hell, into the unquenchable fire." The tremendous impressiveness of this warning is increased by the fact that it is repeated three times with varying imagery (Mark ix. 43-48).

2. Judgment.—The teaching concerning sin is made all the more forcible by the teaching concerning future judgment. The reference to judgment is frequent in our Lord's discourses and sayings (see Matt. vii. 1, 2, and 22, 23, x. 15, xi. 22, 24, xii. 36, xxiv., xxv.; Luke xxi.; John v. 21-29, xvii. 2, etc.). The clearest and most impressive of the passages which deal with judgment is Matt. xxv. 31-46. Here is drawn a terribly vivid picture of a great universal judgment of men according to their works. Nothing could serve so well to force upon the mind the awfulness of sin.

3. Sin against Love.—In the most tremendous passages which speak of sin and judgment, the sin which brings condemnation is sin against love. So it is in Mark ix. 42 ff.: it is better to die miserably than to cause one of Christ's little ones to stumble. So it is especially in the judgment scene in Matt. xxv. All, good and bad, are judged by the love or the want of love which has marked their lives.

This principle is emphasised by the fact that the Judge identifies Himself with those who were or should have been the objects of that love, for this identification exalts the principle of love to the throne of the universe and exhibits its supremacy. The fatal character of sin against love appears also in the condition of Divine forgiveness so often laid down by our Lord (see above p. 53), especially in the parable by which that condition is so powerfully taught, the parable of the unforgiving servant (Matt. xviii. 23-35). There can be little doubt that our Lord, in putting this aspect of sin in so very prominent a manner before His hearers, intended to teach them the true nature of sin. Sin is not merely that by which men forfeit certain rewards, lose happiness, incur misery: sin is not to be regarded simply in respect of its consequences, awful as those consequences are. Sin is the violation of love, of that which is the very nature of God and the highest law of God's universe. It is an offence against the great Father Himself. Every sin is a sin against love, and love is the nature of God. In the parable, the selfishness of the servant towards his fellow brings back upon him the whole burden of his sin against God (Matt. xviii. 32-34).

4. Rewards.—Our Lord dwells with great force and emphasis on the fact that sin brings punishment and that goodness brings reward. But, as we have just seen, this is not His deepest teaching concerning the nature of sin and goodness.

The subject of the consequences, rewards and punishments, which follow upon conduct is however one which is beset with difficulties, because of the ambiguities of language and the confusion of thought. To live with a view to reward is not wrong, provided we aim at the right reward. To avoid sin because it brings punishment is right, provided we view properly the true nature of the punishment. To do good for selfish reward, for a reward that we seek to enjoy by ourselves alone, or because we desire to escape certain pains that will otherwise come upon us, is not merely wrong, it is impossible. For such action, though outwardly it may conform to the demands of the moral law, is not truly good. It does not spring from the "pure heart". It lacks the right motive. It is mere selfishness. But this does not dispose of the question of rewards, for there are unselfish rewards as well as selfish, and there can be no higher goodness than that which aims at the highest, the unselfish, reward. From this point of view, the reward is simply the end at which good conduct aims. All conduct must aim at some end. Good conduct aims at the good, the true end. That end is itself the reward. In our Lord's teaching the true end, the *summum bonum*, at which all should aim is "the Kingdom". "Seek first the Kingdom." And it will be found that, in our Lord's teaching, the Kingdom is itself the reward. Sometimes it is described as "the joy of thy Lord" (Matt. xxv. 21), sometimes plainly as "the King-

dom" (Matt. xxv. 34), sometimes as "eternal life" (Matt. xxv. 46). But all alike are ways of describing that one glorious end in which God Himself with all His children shall have one undivided blessedness. And so, to live for the reward which Christ sets before us is to live for the good itself.

5. The Reward in this Life.—"The Kingdom" here means, of course, the Kingdom in its full realisation. But let it be noted that the immediate reward or "happiness" which goodness brings to those who do it is essentially the same reward, for, as has been already shown, all good conduct realises the Kingdom partially. Men are blessed in doing good, because what they reach in the very doing of the good is the thing they are aiming at, that degree of the realisation of the Kingdom which corresponds to their position and circumstances. In doing good man attains his true end, so far as he can attain it under the circumstances. That very fact constitutes the reward, the blessing, the happiness, of goodness. It thus becomes very clear that there is no evil in living and working for reward. The good or evil depends on the nature of the reward for which the work is done.

6. Punishment.—The case of punishment is in part parallel to that of reward. The horror of exclusion from the Kingdom, of the loss of that which is alone worth having, of living in vain, of being shut out of the realm of love, of separation from God, this is a motive which has a right to irresistible power with

every human heart. It is only the other side of the true motive of all good conduct. It is that motive regarded negatively. But there is more to be said, for the fear of punishment is often a shrinking from pain as pain. The man feels terrified at the thought of his evil deeds, because he is afraid he may have to endure unpleasant sensations on account of them. His fear is wholly selfish. It cannot be pretended that this is a high motive. It is however often the first step to higher things. The thunder of the law and the fear of penalty which it awakens in the heart are like the loud noise which rouses the heavy sleeper. When he has been thoroughly awakened he is in a better position to realise the truth of things.

7. Moral Progress.—The above consideration of sin, judgment and the consequences of action, was necessary as an introduction to the general subject of moral progress as treated of in the teachings of our Lord. Under the head of moral progress must be placed Repentance, the moral beginning; self-denial, the condition which is necessary if man is to overcome in the moral struggle; Faith and Hope by which there comes to the soul moral power.

8. Repentance.—This was the first note of the Gospel. “Repent, for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand.” It was the burden of John the Baptist’s preaching and the first proclamation by our Lord Himself. Repentance means strictly a change of heart and life. It means altering the set of the will.

Such a change implies a change in the mind as well as in the will. There must be illumination revealing to the man his true condition as a sinner, so that he comes to recognise sin in all its awfulness. He perceives that sin means the loss of all that is worth having, exclusion from the Kingdom and love of God. In Christian experience it is impossible to separate repentance and faith. In Scripture the two are usually found united (Mark i. 15; Acts xx. 21; Heb. vi. 1, etc.). The turning away from sin implies the turning to God. The act is one, but has two aspects, or, perhaps more accurately, stages. It is this truth which has led to the common use of the modern term *conversion* to include the whole spiritual experience which in Scripture is described more fully by the double term "Repentance and Faith".

9. Self-denial.—Repentance is the beginning, but it is not a solitary experience in the Christian life. It is renewed often, perpetually. For there is need of a constant turning from sin to God. This fact implies a continual struggle with evil going on through the whole of life. Here comes in the need of self-denial. At the beginning there is necessary a greater or less sacrifice of self, for sin has by means of hereditary weakness or habit a powerful hold upon the heart and there must be the will to give up all that is contrary to the will of God, no easy sacrifice. But this sacrifice does not cease. It often, perhaps usually, becomes more necessary

as life goes on, at least up to a certain point. The greatest spiritual struggles seldom take place at the beginning of conscious Christian experience. They come later, not far on, as a rule, but in the earlier part of the course of the life. Therefore it was that our Lord found it necessary to warn His disciples often of the absolute necessity of being ready to deny themselves for His sake. "He that loveth father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me; and he that loveth son or daughter more than Me is not worthy of Me. And he that doth not take his cross and follow after Me, is not worthy of Me. He that findeth his life shall lose it; and he that loseth his life for My sake shall find it" (Matt. x. 37-39; see also Luke xiv. 25-27, etc.). Therefore also our Lord turned and warned the multitudes that came crowding after Him that if they wished truly to follow Him and become His disciples they should understand what they were doing and count the cost (Luke xiv. 28-33). "Whosoever he be of you that renounceth not all that he hath, he cannot be My disciple" (verse 33).

10. Self-denial and Virtue.—In the working out of moral theory, it will be found that self-denial is not in itself virtue, it is not, that is, an end to be sought in and for itself. But this does not deprive it of importance, because it is a great means to the supreme end. It is an essential condition of the formation of virtue, or good character. When the Kingdom comes in its perfection, self-denial will be

no longer necessary. Love will control all things and love made perfect will bring perfect happiness. But, in this imperfect state in which we live in this world, self-denial, a self-sacrificing will, is absolutely necessary if there is to be any pressing forward.

11. Faith and Hope.—It has always been the despair of moral teachers to provide men with a power to enable them to do the law. It was possible to declare the law and to see reason why the law should be obeyed. But when the ingrained evil of the human heart and the innate weakness of the human will came to be considered, and when the sinner asked, How am I to obtain power to keep the law? there was, as a rule, nothing to be said. Here especially our Lord rises supreme over all moralists. He provides a power, and that power is Himself. When we have reached this stage in our study we have come to the subject which must occupy our attention in the second part of this little book. Here we can only mention briefly the subjective means, the spiritual conditions, which are demanded by Christ in order that the great moral power may work in the hearts of men. Those subjective means are Faith and Hope.

12. Faith.—Faith occupies a very important position in the teaching of our Lord. He continually makes it the condition of receiving blessing. "According to your faith be it done unto you" (Matt. ix. 29) is a rule which finds illustrations in all our Lord's dealings with men. "Thy faith hath saved

thee" is another characteristic utterance of the same principle. It is the striking exhibition of faith which calls forth the strongest expressions of Christ's approbation. St. Peter's confession (Matt. xvi. 16, 17), the centurion at whose faith Christ marvelled and of whom He said, "I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel" (Luke vii. 9), occur to the mind at once as instances. To faith Christ gives His most wonderful promises (Matt. vii. 7-11; Mark ix. 23, 24, xi. 22-24, etc.). But it is in St. John's Gospel that we find teaching concerning the necessity of faith most fully given. It is the condition of having eternal life (John iii. 15, 16, 36, v. 24, etc.). It is the duty of duties, "This is the work of God, that ye believe on Him whom He hath sent" (John vi. 29). It is the means by which all great things are to be done: "He that believeth on Me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go to the Father" (John xiv. 12). But, above all, our Lord claims faith by continually holding Himself up as the object of it. This is the largest element in the revelation of Christ contained in the fourth Gospel.

13. Nature of Faith.—The faith which fills so great a space in our Lord's teaching is no mere intellectual assent, nor is it a formal admission of the justice of His vast claim upon the allegiance of men. Faith is moral as well as mental. It is the yielding of heart as well as of mind. In it the man enters into a relation with God which involves trust, personal

confidence. It is indeed the recognition by the human soul of God as the one true ground of all security. It is the resting of the whole being upon God. Faith apprehends God's character and trusts in it. It is insight, and it is confidence arising from insight. It is therefore an entering into a state of moral unity with God. Thus it is the means by which God becomes the power of the man's moral life.

14. Hope.—This is really an aspect of faith. It is faith as directed to the future. The whole moral life must, if there is to be any true progress in it, move towards an end. That end is, as must now be obvious, the supreme end at which every good action and every good life aims: the Kingdom in its perfection. Our Lord taught us to hope by setting before us the great object of hope; just as He taught faith by setting up Himself as the object of it. He taught us to pray "Thy Kingdom come," and so made to spring through all the ages a perpetual fountain of hope in the hearts of His people. By precept and parable He impressed upon His disciples the urgent necessity of incessant watchfulness. They are always to be ready to receive their Lord. They know not the hour when He will return. But they do know that He will come some day in power and great glory. They know that His final victory over evil is absolutely certain. Therefore, as they watch and struggle here on earth, they have a hope which is like "an anchor of the soul, a hope both sure and steadfast" (Heb. vi. 19).

15. Christian Optimism.—Christianity is the greatest and noblest of all optimisms. And it has this quality because, more than any other religion, it is the religion of hope. The pessimist thinks he can prove his case if he can show that on the whole there is more pain than pleasure in human life. But the Christian optimist can admit this, if he thinks the balance of evidence is in its favour, and remain unmoved; because he knows that all things are working together for good. He knows that the Kingdom will come in its perfect glory and eternal love reign supreme.

16. Need of Religion.—We have now reached the end of our discussion of the ruling ideas of our Lord's moral teaching. The impression left upon our mind surely is that the moral teaching is only a half-truth, and that the religious teaching is required for its completion. Indeed we have been led into a position which would be almost unmeaning for us were it not that we have the religious teaching of Christ in our minds, and so are enabled to read into our language profounder significances than those ethical ones which seem to occupy us. The consideration of faith and hope has brought us to the border of religion, and we must now cross that border and try to understand something of a fairer and greater domain than that of morality.

PART II.
RELIGIOUS IDEAS.

CHAPTER V.

THE FATHER.

1. Religion and Morality.—In dealing with the leading religious ideas in our Lord's teaching, it will be impossible, in the small space available for the purpose in this little book, to do more than give a meagre outline. But this outline is necessary, because, as was pointed out above, the moral teaching of our Lord cannot be wholly separated from His religious teaching. The two cannot be adequately treated apart from one another, for they are necessarily related and complementary. The moral teaching looks to the religious for its inspiration, its power, its final justification. The religious teaching supplies principles which are to animate and glorify the moral life. Our Lord's point of view was prevalently religious, and when we follow His guidance in the consideration of moral questions we have always to adopt, more or less completely, the religious mode of thought. Therefore, as will be seen readily upon reflection, all those ethical ideas which we passed in rapid review in part i. have a religious side to them, and that side has turned to the light very frequently already.

2. The Two Stages.—It was pointed out above (see p. xviii.) that there are two distinct stages in the teaching of our Lord. The first, which is mainly ethical, is best represented by the Sermon on the Mount. The second, which is mainly religious, becomes more prominent as His ministry advances and finds its fullest and grandest expression in the great discourse contained in chapters xiv.-xvi. of St. John's Gospel. In part i. we dealt mainly with the first stage and, as the references made from time to time to the text of Scripture will show, we had to rely principally upon the earlier parts of the synoptic Gospels. In part ii. we shall have to deal with the second stage and to rely more upon the later teachings and upon the fourth Gospel. The ruling ideas which may be said to govern the teaching of the second stage are vaster and more profound than those with which our minds have been occupied so far, and the problems which they suggest are more perplexing, more overwhelming. We must therefore guard against being led too far, and must be content if we can think, as simply as we may, a few of those wonderful thoughts about God and man and eternity which our Lord conveyed to His disciples in His own wonderful fashion so long ago.

3. God.—Christ deepened and intensified all human thought about God, not only by the teaching that He gave, but also by His manner, His manifestation of His own spiritual experience, and, above all, by simply being what He was, and, at the same time, declaring

Himself to be a revelation of the mind and will of God (see Matt. xi. 27, xxv. 31 ff. ; John v. 19 ff., viii. 12 ff., x. 25 ff., xii. 44 ff., xiv.-xvi.). From this last cause the world has learned a lesson about God which it can never forget, in spite of all its negations and scepticisms. Hence we see the difficulty of separating the teaching from the life of Christ. Indeed, in this latter part of our study, we shall have to keep very distinctly in mind the person as well as the words of our Lord. From both life and teaching we learn that, to Him, God was an ever-present reality. We must conclude, if we study the Gospel account carefully, that Jesus was intensely conscious of God's presence and also of God's nature, attitude, and relation to Himself. He saw into the heart of God with a clearness of vision unparalleled in human experience.

4. Jesus Reveals the Heart of God.—This is one great secret of the power which our Lord exercises over all spiritual souls. It is why men accept the teaching which He gave about God on the sole authority of Him who gave it. Jesus always speaks as one having authority. He speaks out of the depths of a perfect knowledge. And whenever a human soul is able truly to hear, belief follows. The revelation made by Christ to man carries conviction with it. It is so great a thing that it cannot but be true. It is the revelation of God as God *must* be. When once man has seen it, no other account of God can be accepted. In making this statement we

are not following any logical process or forging a chain of reason, we are simply summarising facts. This is the deliverance of history about the revelation of God made by Jesus Christ. What then, let us ask, is that revelation? The answer to this question cannot wholly be put into a set of propositions, because Christ Himself is the fullest expression of the revelation in question. But there are certain great leading principles which may be put into words and which we have now to consider.

5. The Fatherhood of God.—This conception is characteristic of the whole New Testament and is derived from the teaching of our Lord Himself. Regarded in the abstract, it is not however confined to Christianity. The Old Testament contains it in many passages. "Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear Him" (Ps. ciii. 13). Also in Deuteronomy in several passages (i. 31, viii. 5, xxxii. 6) God is described as the Father of Israel. The idea may be traced in different ways in the Old Testament (see Is. lxiii. 16, lxiv. 8; Jer. iii. 4, 19; Hos. xi. 1, etc.). It may be found also in a paler form in the pagan conception of the supreme deity as "Father of gods and men". But, as taught by our Lord, the Fatherhood of God became a new thing. It gained also a power and reality it never possessed before. The truth is, this new character and power came from Christ Himself. He made the idea to become great by being what He was and

making men feel what God was to Him. We are too apt to import our modern thoughts of the tender loving Christian father into our conception of the Fatherhood of God. Fatherhood is not, in all conditions of society, suggestive of watchful loving affection. It has sometimes signified a very harsh and unsympathetic rule. And even among us, the idea of the divine Fatherhood would not be the rich and glorious thing it is, if it were separated from our Lord and His manner of teaching it. In the teaching of Christ God's Fatherhood is presented in three ways.

6. The Father of Our Lord.—Jesus speaks of God continually as "My Father". The name was very dear to our Lord. It sprang from His inner consciousness of relationship with God, and He loved to dwell upon it. As thus used, it bore a special meaning. He was Son of God in a peculiar sense, a sense in which an ordinary human being cannot be so called. This truth is emphasised by the manner in which the expression "My Father" is frequently used. Thus our Lord says: "Everyone therefore who shall confess Me before men, him will I also confess before My Father which is in heaven," etc. (Matt. x. 32, 33). Also, in the remarkable declaration in Matt. xi., "All things have been delivered unto Me of My Father; and no one knoweth the Son, save the Father; neither doth any know the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son willeth to reveal Him" (verse

27). In these passages the words "My Father" are evidently intended to distinguish our Lord as in a special sense the Son of God. The second of the two passages gives what may almost be described as a definition of what constitutes this peculiar Sonship. St. John's Gospel contains many such passages. "My Father worketh even until now and I work" (John v. 17). "I and the Father are one" (John x. 30, "My Father" occurring immediately before in verse 29). Throughout the whole of chapters xiv.-xvii. Christ speaks of "the Father" and "My Father" in a way which implies a peculiarly close relationship between the Father and the Son. In John xx. 17 He contrasts His own special Sonship with the sonship of others: "I ascend unto My Father and your Father, and My God and your God" (see also Matt. vii. 21, xvi. 17, xviii. 10, 19, 35, xx. 23; Luke ii. 49, xxii. 29, xxiv. 49; John v. 20-45, vi. 32 ff., viii. 19 ff., etc.). This great array of passages shows how fully the consciousness of our Lord as revealed in His utterances corresponds with the announcement made from heaven at the beginning of His ministry, "Thou art My beloved Son, in Thee I am well pleased" (Mark i. 11), and also with the announcement on the Mount of Transfiguration (Mark ix. 7).

7. The Father of Christ's Disciples.—Our Lord taught His disciples to think of themselves as a family with God above them as their Father. The Sermon on the Mount is the law of the Kingdom,

but its language justifies the statement that it is the law of the family of God. In it Christ addresses His disciples and continually speaks to them of God, calling Him "your Father" (Matt. v. 16, 45, 48, vi. 1, 8, 14, 15, 32, vii. 11, etc.). Sometimes the little company of the disciples is pointedly addressed and reminded of their Father in Heaven. "Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the Kingdom" (Luke xii. 32). Sometimes the disciples are exhorted to be worthy of their position as sons of such a Father. "Love your enemies, and pray for them that persecute you; that ye may be sons of your Father which is in heaven" (Matt. v. 45). It is interesting to note that when our Lord speaks of the whole order of things to which His people belong, He calls it the Kingdom; and when He speaks of Him who is supreme in this Kingdom, He calls Him, not as a rule the King, but the Father. The reason can hardly be other than this: the term *Kingdom* is much more suited to convey our Lord's conception of the whole order to which His people belonged. That order, He evidently intended, was not to be identified too exclusively with the then existing body of the faithful. He wished it to be regarded as the ideal blessing, the great end to which all the energies of His people were to be directed, as well as to include the actual concrete Church, or body of the faithful, at any moment of its existence. With this in view the term *Kingdom* was far more expressive than the term *Family*. It

was also useful as drawing to itself those longings and associations which attached to it in the minds of the Jews. On the other hand, the word *King* as applied to God, while very familiar to the ears of the Jewish listeners, was not suited to convey those thoughts about God's nature, and especially God's love, which our Lord desired to implant in the hearts of His disciples.

8. The Father of all.—Our Lord's teaching also regards God as the Father of all men. God is "kind toward the unthankful and evil" (Luke vi. 35). "He maketh His sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sendeth rain on the just and the unjust." But clearest of all is the beautiful parable of the Prodigal Son. Here the sinner who squanders the gifts which God has given him is yet, in spite of all, regarded as a child over whom the Father's heart is yearning and who is received with joy when he returns. The thought which has power with the prodigal to bring him back when the time of want comes is the thought that, after all, he has a Father and a home. And, when he returns, he finds that his Father's love is greater than he could possibly have imagined. And, let it be remembered, this parable was uttered when the Pharisees and scribes murmured against our Lord for receiving publicans and sinners.

9. Summary.—To sum up, our Lord teaches us to think of God, in the first instance, as Father. But also as a Father who is Sovereign over the

greatest of all Kingdoms. The characteristic attribute of this Paternal Sovereignty is love. The Fatherhood of God may be said however to go beyond the sovereignty, for God is a Father even to the unthankful and evil. His love is so wide in its sweep that it includes those who have turned their backs upon the Kingdom, who have renounced the supreme blessing of dwelling in the Father's house: "God so loved the world" (John iii. 16). This vast love is the principle which underlies all that in Holy Scripture is described as *Salvation*. It explains the mission of the Christ. He expresses the love of God: "God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son". This love is the inner meaning of the life of Him who came to seek and to save the lost. It is that Divine characteristic which makes there to be "joy in Heaven over one sinner that repenteth" (Luke xv. 7). And when this love has won the sinner, it introduces him into a circle in which he is brought more immediately under the Divine Fatherhood. He becomes a member of the family, the Kingdom, that great order of things in which men feel and experience the love of the great Father. The sinner is reconciled, restored, and enabled to rejoice. Finally, there is that third and supreme degree of Divine Fatherhood which belongs to the relation between the Father and Him who is in a unique sense the Son. The life and death of Christ are a great revelation of the love of God to man just because of this relation. If our Lord did

not stand in some very close relation to the Father, how could He be a revelation of the Father, and how could His life and death tell us of God's love. God's love appears because He gave His only begotten Son.

CHAPTER VI.

THE SON.

1. The Self-assertion of Our Lord.—The main burden of the second stage of our Lord's teaching is Himself. It is one of the great paradoxes of His personality that, while humility was one of His most marked characteristics, He yet preached Himself as none before or since ever dared to do. At times this paradox is presented in a single utterance: the humility and the self-assertion are side by side. "Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you, and learn of Me; for I am meek and lowly in heart; and ye shall find rest unto your souls" (Matt. xi. 28, 29). The Person who gives such an invitation and such a promise is certainly making a tremendous claim. Yet, in the same breath, He says, "I am meek and lowly in heart". Still more remarkable, the utterance follows immediately upon words which contain one of the strongest statements in Scripture of the dignity of our Lord's Person. The words are His own: "All things have been delivered unto Me of My Father; and no one knoweth the Son, save the Father; neither doth

any know the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son willeth to reveal Him" (Matt. xi. 27). But this passage is only one out of many. The claim of our Lord upon the hearts and lives of men was continually asserted by Him in a manner which leaves no room for doubt that He regarded Himself as one who had a right to all the devotion of which the human heart is capable. If the Almighty spoke in words of thunder from Heaven He could not put His claim to human allegiance in stronger terms (see Matt. x. 37-39, xvi. 24-28, xix. 28, 29, xxv. 31 ff.; Mark viii. 34-38; Luke xxi. 10-19, and throughout St. John's Gospel. See especially John v. 18 ff., viii. 12 ff., x. 30, xiv. 6 ff.).

2. Our Lord's Presentation of Himself.—The only fit explanation of the amazing paradox which has just been pointed out is the one which Christian believers have always given. Christ is God. He is the Second Person of the Divine Trinity Incarnate. "The Word was made flesh and dwelt among us." Our concern at present however is not with this great doctrine, but with that element in our Lord's teaching which we have just been considering. Among the ruling religious ideas of His teaching His conception of Himself and of His relation to God and man must occupy a very important place. If He had been a mere teacher, this would not be for us now a matter of first-rate importance. But, in His own presentation of the meaning of His life and ministry, it is made a matter of the utmost import-

ance, and, therefore, if we wish to grasp the ruling ideas, we must give it a very prominent position.

3. Our Lord's Method of Self-revelation.—In view of what has just been indicated, it is well to note however that our Lord did not, especially in the earlier part of His ministry, make open proclamation of Himself as the Messiah. Nor did He declare Himself Divine. That was not His method. It would be truer to say that He exhibited His Messiahship and Divinity, rather than that He claimed them. In the period of the earlier Galilean ministry, it is plain that a proclamation of His Messiahship would have inflamed the minds of the multitude and led to violence. Our Lord deliberately avoided such results (John vi. 15). But His reserve in the use of recognised Messianic titles had a deeper meaning than merely prudence in dealing with the multitude. He knew that faith springs into life not from names and titles, but from the recognition by the soul of that which alone is worthy to be the true object of faith. Therefore it was that our Lord's preaching of His Messiahship and Divinity consisted, not so much in making claims, as in exhibiting His Divine character, His authority, His power, His truth. And even when He made assertions about Himself which involved the claim to Divinity, His language was rather a revelation of a truth which it was urgently necessary His hearers should know than the statement of a claim on His part. He spoke, out of His own inner consciousness

of his relation to God, those things of God which man requires for his life and, as a rule, left it to those who heard and understood to draw their own conclusions as to His Person (see Matt. xi. 27; John v. 19 ff.). His very way of saying "My Father" is an illustration of this method. And even with His own disciples, we see that He desired, not to tell them who He was, but to make them see the truth for themselves (Matt. xvi. 13-20). There are certain leading thoughts concerning Himself which are very prominent in our Lord's teaching. These we must consider.

4. Son of Man.—This is the title which our Lord habitually used to describe Himself. It was the title He chose for Himself, and it is so characteristic of His own peculiar point of view that, though he used it constantly—it occurs about eighty times in the Gospels—it is not used of Him by others. The title is a notable instance of that very method of presenting Himself to men that we have just been considering. The name was in itself a problem and a challenge. It suggested but did not define. It was possibly Messianic, for it recalled the great passage in Daniel where "one like unto a Son of Man" came to the Ancient of Days and received an everlasting Kingdom (Dan. vii. 13). On the other hand, it was not so recognised as a Messianic title as of itself to constitute a claim on the part of our Lord to be the Messiah. It excited the question: "Who is this Son of Man?" (John xii. 34). The name is

truly a mark of our Lord's humiliation, yet it is most pointedly employed by Him in those passages in which His glory and majesty are described (see Matt. xiii. 41, xix. 28, xxv. 31 ff., xxvi. 64; Luke xxi. 36; John v. 27, vi. 62, etc.).

5. The Humanity of Our Lord.—The title Son of Man expresses in the first instance our Lord's *humanity*. How vast has been its value to the Church in all ages in this respect it is impossible to estimate. It is Christ's own testimony to His perfect brotherhood with men. While this name, so dear to Himself and so characteristic of His own point of view, remains enshrined in very many of His most precious sayings it is impossible to forget that the Christ who came to save us is indeed our Brother. We find that our Lord used the title in close connection with His mission of Salvation. "The Son of Man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give His life a ransom for many" (Matt. xx. 28). And again, "The Son of Man came to seek and to save that which was lost" (Luke xix. 10).

6. The Ideal Man.—In calling Himself the Son of Man, our Lord is often supposed to present Himself as the ideal of humanity, the representative man. It might seem that this conception is too modern in kind to be correctly attributed to Him. But this seeming is in error. The Old Testament has its ideal figures. Indeed there is nothing more common in Old Testament thought than the ideal-

ising of certain notable figures and making them stand as representatives of whole classes or peoples. Abraham, Moses, David, and many others came to be regarded as typical figures. In the latter part of Isaiah this method of thought reaches its most perfect development. There the ideal Israel is depicted as the "Servant of Jehovah". Over and over again Israel is addressed by Jehovah in this prophecy as His Servant. But, as the prophet proceeds, the conception grows until in the fifty-third chapter it becomes the wonderful ideal form of the suffering servant of Jehovah who is contrasted with, and yet one with, the people of God. There is therefore no anachronism in supposing that when our Lord styled Himself the "Son of Man" He intended to set Himself forth as the representative of the human race, the ideal Man. Only, here as everywhere, our Lord gains the universal point of view. He "fulfils" the law. He passes beyond the narrow limits of Judaism and, as in the parable of the Good Samaritan, embraces all mankind.

7. Christ the Ideal Negatively.—Christ is the ideal Man, because in Him God's design for man is accomplished. Negatively, He is Man made perfect, for He "was tempted in all points like as we are, yet without sin". In His moral and spiritual development during His life on earth whenever evil assailed Him, He overcame it. In Him, that is, human character—for we speak now of Christ as man—reached that full and perfect growth which

the Creator intended for it. It was in no respect injured by any yielding to sin in heart or life. So conscious was He of this that He could challenge His opponents to put their finger on a flaw in His character. "Which of you convicteth Me of sin?" (John viii. 46). In one of His extraordinary spiritual sensitiveness, this expression of His own inner consciousness, for such we must regard it, is of supreme value. As He looked within, that spiritual sight, the keenest ever possessed by man, could perceive no trace of impurity or imperfection. He was conscious of utter right and truth within. The same consciousness manifests itself in many other ways throughout the whole of our Lord's ministry. The psychological value of this expression of the result of His own self-scrutiny is immense, for the history of great souls proves that moral sensitiveness, coupled with extreme goodness, produces an almost morbid consciousness of whatever blemishes have injured the character.

8. Christ the Ideal Positively.—Positively, our Lord is also the ideal of manhood. In His absolute devotion to the purpose of His life, in His utter truth and sincerity, in the unflinching courage with which He attacked the sins that were enthroned in high places, in His unfailing readiness to help the needy and suffering, in His boundless love and self-sacrifice, Jesus Christ stands before us as human character in its utmost beauty and perfection. The influence which this character has had upon men ever since

has been already noted. It may be truly said that, if Jesus is the revelation of God, He is also the revelation of man. He exhibited manhood in its ideal form.

9. Christ Sums up God's Design for Man.— Being thus Man made perfect, our Lord stands before us, in His human nature, as the great Representative of the human race. In Him we see God's design in the creation of mankind accomplished, so far as one human life is concerned. But, how can this be, it may be asked, seeing that the life of Christ was a life of sorrow? Did not God make man for happiness rather than misery? The question leads on to higher reflections. In the life of Christ we see the contact between the ideal perfection of humanity and the actual life of men with all its evils as well as its imperfect good. The result is exactly what was foreseen by Plato (*Republic*, bk. ii., ch. v.). The perfectly good man seems "unjust" when brought face to face with the world. And "thus situated," says the disputant in the dialogue, "he will be scourged, racked, fettered, have his eyes burnt out, and, finally, suffer all manner of evils, and be crucified". The words read like a prophecy. The perfect Man, in this sinful world, must give Himself to the work of undoing the evil and therefore must suffer. Thus the very sufferings of Christ belong to His position as Representative of humanity. The truth which the insight of Plato discerned was far more wonderfully expressed in the great prophecy

of the latter portion of Isaiah. There the ideal Israel takes shape as the suffering servant of Jehovah. He becomes a majestic figure who bears the sins and griefs of the actual Israel. The contrast between the ideal and the actual is so vivid here and the relation so necessary to the salvation of the latter that it is hard to see how this prophecy can be dissociated from the wonderful fulfilment which it received in the person of our Lord. This reflection is perhaps the best guide to the understanding of all that is meant by the term Son of Man. As in the vision of the prophet, the suffering servant sums up God's purposes, both of salvation and of destiny, for His people; so the title *Son of Man* implies that in Christ are summed up God's great designs for the whole human race.

10. Son of God.—This title was not often used of Himself by our Lord (see Matt. xxvii. 43; John v. 25, ix. 35). But His constant and peculiar use of the expression "My Father" (see p. 85) proves that He wished to imply His right to be regarded as, in a special sense, the Son of God. Also He is often so called by others (see Matt. iv. 3, viii. 29, xiv. 33, xxvii. 40, 54; Mark iii. 11; Luke xxii. 70; John i. 34, 49, iii. 18, etc.). The nature of the title marks it out as the one which was naturally seized upon by His disciples as the simplest and readiest to represent the mystery of His Person, that mystery which distinguished Him from other men. The essence of that mystery, as manifested in every

expression of His inner mind, was the close relation in which He stood to the Father (see Matt. xi. 27).

11. The Divinity of Our Lord.—It is by means of this title that the *Divinity* of our Lord finds its simplest expression. The profound problems which are opened up to the intellectual faculties by the mere statement of the Divinity of Christ are held in abeyance by means of this title more than by any other means. When the Word (the *Logos*) is spoken of, as in the prologue to St. John's Gospel, there is an immediate challenge to the intellect; theology is inevitable. But the term "Son of God" as applied to our Lord is the most practical way in which His Divinity can be expressed for the uses of the religious life. This is no doubt because it suggests a whole series of the most effective religious, as distinguished from theological, conceptions. The Fatherhood of God, the family as the type of the Divine order of things, the Son as the representative of the Father and speaking the Father's mind and heart to men—these simple but profound and satisfying thoughts are all suggested when we think of our Lord as the Son of God.

12. Son of God and Son of Man.—It is to be observed that the two titles modify and explain one another. The one without the other would be deprived of half its meaning. Why is it so remarkable that our Lord chose to call Himself habitually the *Son of Man*? Why did He lay such emphasis on a name which His obvious humanity made to ap-

pear to the superficial hearer almost an absurdity? Surely it was because He was also Son of God. The humanity had to be emphasised on account of the Divinity. On the other hand, the title *Son of God* implies that He who is the Son of Man, He who is truly our brother, who lived as man among men, and is indeed the most perfect example of manhood, is also Divine. The two titles when thus taken together constitute our Lord's own most characteristic way of expressing the nature of His Person. It was in this way that He chose to teach men His humanity and His Divinity, and the miracle of their union in One Person.

13. The Incarnation.—That great doctrine concerning our Lord's Person which is usually termed the *Incarnation* is implied in those very conceptions with which we have just been dealing. From the discourses in St. John's Gospel we learn more fully what was intended by the use of the two titles *Son of God* and *Son of Man*. These discourses reveal the mode in which our Lord met the criticisms of educated Jews and instructed His disciples in those deeper teachings which were specially needful for them. In both cases He had to justify His own position and to state the grounds of that vast authority which He assumed. The ultimate justification is, in each case, the same—a declaration of His relation to the Father. Thus, in John v. He associates Himself with God the Father in work: "My Father worketh even until now and I work". The Jews

understood the greatness of His claim, and accused Him of "making Himself equal with God" (implied in verse 18). In reply, our Lord made a great statement of His connexion with the Father. It is an intimate organic connexion. In work (verse 19), in love and mutual understanding (verse 20), in the giving of life (verse 21), in judgment (verse 22), the Son is closely associated with the Father, and performs Divine functions. All are to honour the Son even as they honour the Father (verse 23): "He that honoureth not the Son honoureth not the Father which sent Him". Then follow a great promise of eternal life through the hearing of the word of Christ and through faith (verse 24), and an announcement of a time when "the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God and they that hear shall live. For as the Father hath life in Himself, even so gave He to the Son also to have life in Himself; and He gave Him authority to execute judgment, because He is the Son of Man" (verses 25, 26, 27). This wonderful passage expresses the Divinity, or rather Deity, of Christ with a fulness which is almost unexampled. It does so, not by saying in so many words that Christ is God, but in the far more real and exact way of enumerating all the most Divine of Divine attributes, one by one, and ascribing them to the Son. It is pervaded throughout by the conception of an organic relation of the Son to the Father as the perpetual source of the Divine activity of the former. And it ends

with a sudden turning back upon the humanity of the Son, "because He is the Son of Man" (verse 27), which is most remarkable. Here then is a very clear implication of the Incarnation. Teaching very similar in character, with the same turning back upon the name "Son of Man," will be found in John viii. 25-29 (see especially verse 28). In John x. 30 our Lord sums up in a single short sentence that deliverance of His inner consciousness as to His relation to His Father which occurs so continually in His teaching concerning Himself: "I and the Father are one". It is the consciousness expressed by this and similar passages (*e.g.*, Matt. xi. 27; John v. 17 ff., viii. 12 ff., etc.) which, taken in conjunction with the unique nature of His life and character, constitutes the strongest proof of His Divinity.

14. The Pre-existence of the Son.—The incarnation is very clearly implied in those passages in which our Lord declares His pre-existence. "Your father Abraham," He said to the Jews, "rejoiced to see My day, and he saw it and was glad. The Jews therefore said unto Him, Thou art not yet fifty years old, and hast Thou seen Abraham? Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Before Abraham was, I am" (John viii. 56-58). And in John xvii. 5, "Now, O Father, glorify Thou Me with Thine own self with the glory which I had with Thee before the world was". Such utterances imply that our Lord had possessed a glorious Divine life with His Father

before He entered into the limitations of a human life in this world. There was a time when He became flesh and began to dwell among us (John i. 14).

15. Union in Christ.—The relation between the Incarnate Son of God and the life of His believing people, the members of His Kingdom, is set forth principally in certain passages of the great discourse in the latter part of St. John's Gospel. The subject is naturally introduced there, because there our Lord is teaching the inner circle of His disciples and preparing them for the future. He declares Himself to be the means of communication between God and man. "I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one cometh unto the Father but by Me" (John xiv. 6, see also John x. 9). He describes Himself as the bond of union by which men are united in God and to one another. "In that day ye shall know that I am in My Father, and ye in Me, and I in you" (John xiv. 20). This truth is taught more fully in the parable of the vine. "Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself except it abide in the vine; so neither can ye except ye abide in Me. I am the vine, ye are the branches. He that abideth in Me, and I in him, the same beareth much fruit; for apart from Me ye can do nothing" (John xv. 4 ff.). This unifying function of Christ by which He brings God and man into one, and by which He unites men in Himself, must be regarded as one aspect of His Incarnation. It is one

way of presenting the truth expressed by the two titles *Son of God* and *Son of Man*.

16. The Atonement.—In the beginning of St. Matthew's Gospel, a very important significance is attached to the meaning of our Lord's personal name: "Thou shalt call His name JESUS; for it is He that shall SAVE His people from their sins" (Matt. i. 21). In Luke ii. 11 the shepherds learn from the angel that there is born "in the city of David a SAVIOUR which is Christ the Lord". The nature of this salvation is more clearly defined in the announcement of John the Baptist: "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world" (John i. 29). In the earlier part of our Lord's teaching there is not very much to correspond with this view of the work He came to do. He appears as one come to proclaim a Kingdom and to declare the nature of it, as one who calls men to repentance, as one who has great moral lessons to teach, as one who is full of boundless pity for the suffering and possesses a wonderful power to give relief. But He does not at first reveal Himself clearly as the Lamb of God who is to take away the sin of the world. This should not be surprising. We have already seen that our Lord's teaching and revelation of Himself were gradual. He gave to men as they were fitted to receive. He waited for the right moment to speak and to act.

17. Reference to the Atonement in John vi.—When the right moment came our Lord's deliverances

on the subject of His death and the work of salvation He was to accomplish by it were perfectly clear. One of the earliest of these deliverances is that recorded in John vi. A great multitude had been fed wonderfully. The miracle provided a suggestive text, and on it our Lord based a series of teachings about Himself and the meaning of His Person and work. He presented Himself to His hearers as the Bread of Life, the living Bread which came down from Heaven. The miracle took place about the time of the Passover (John vi. 4). And so, along with the idea of the Bread of Life, which suggested the manna in the wilderness (verse 31), there is introduced the idea of the Paschal Lamb, the flesh of which was eaten by those who shared in the feast. "The bread which I will give is My flesh, for the life of the world" (verse 51). This assertion led to much disputing. Then our Lord doubled the force of the image and made His language even more surprising to the Jews by speaking of His blood as well as of His flesh. "Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink His blood, ye have not life in yourselves. He that eateth My flesh and drinketh My blood hath eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day" (verses 53, 54). Whatever further teaching there may be in this passage, the first lesson certainly is that our Lord contemplated giving His body to death "for the life of the world". He regarded Himself as the Paschal Lamb by whose death and blood-

shedding the people of God were to be delivered from death. That His words had a spiritual significance He Himself plainly stated (see verse 63). What that significance is becomes manifest when we turn to His later teachings on the subject of His death.

18. The Atonement in John x.—In John x., where our Lord describes Himself as the Good Shepherd, there is a very clear statement of the meaning and conditions of His death. “I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd layeth down His life for the sheep” (verse 11). And again (verses 14, 15), “I am the good shepherd; and I know Mine own, and Mine own know Me, even as the Father knoweth Me and I know the Father; and I lay down My life for the sheep”. Then follows a statement of the peculiar conditions under which the sacrifice is to be made. “I lay down My life that I may take it again. No one taketh it away from Me, but I lay it down of Myself. I have power to lay it down and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of My Father.” These words speak of a voluntary sacrifice of His life for the sake of men.

19. Declarations Concerning His Death.—On the last journey to Jerusalem before His death our Lord’s mind was much occupied by the terrible events that He knew were approaching. We find that He deliberately took opportunity to inform His disciples and to prepare them for what was coming. “He took again the twelve, and began

to tell them the things that were to happen unto Him, saying, Behold we go up to Jerusalem; and the Son of Man shall be delivered unto the chief priests and the scribes; and they shall condemn Him to death, and shall deliver Him unto the Gentiles; and they shall mock Him, and shall spit upon Him, and shall scourge Him, and shall kill Him; and after three days He shall rise again" (Mark x. 33, 34). This was not the first time He had told them of how His death would take place. St. Peter's great confession of Him as the Christ had been followed by an announcement of His death, an announcement which was followed by repeated statements to the same effect. "*From that time* began Jesus to show unto His disciples, how that He must go unto Jerusalem, and suffer many things of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and the third day be raised up" (Matt. xvi. 21, see also Mark viii. 31, ix. 31; Luke ix. 22, xviii. 31).

20. The Law of Sacrifice.—But these passages, it may be thought, are merely prophetic of the facts and contain no account of the meaning of the facts: they do not declare that His death was to be an atonement for sin. If they do not contain a plain assertion of the atonement, it is at least remarkable that they are followed by very emphatic teaching of the great law of sacrifice. When our Lord announced His rejection by the Jews and His death, "Peter took Him and began to rebuke Him,

saying, Be it far from Thee, Lord: this shall never be unto Thee. But He turned, and said unto Peter, Get thee behind Me, Satan: thou art a stumbling-block unto Me; for thou mindest not the things of God, but the things of men." Then our Lord proceeded to make His approaching crucifixion a parable to teach the disciples that, if they are to be His true disciples, they must follow His example and obey the law of sacrifice. "If any man would come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me. For whosoever would save his life shall lose it; and whosoever shall lose his life for My sake shall find it" (Matt. xvi. 22 ff.). It is plain that, in giving this rule, our Lord was reflecting upon His own work and life. He had to gain the great end set before Him through sacrifice. It was by denying Himself and taking up His cross, by losing His life, that He was called to effect the salvation of men and the establishment of His Kingdom. Upon the example afforded by His own case He founded the teaching He gave to His disciples.

21. The Request of the Sons of Zebedee.—That this interpretation of our Lord's language is correct is proved conclusively by the instruction which He gave to His disciples after the unseasonable request of James and John. It was on the last great journey to Jerusalem. Our Lord, as we have already seen (p. 107), had made a very clear declaration of the circumstances of His death. Then came to Him

the two sons of Zebedee with their mother, their minds inflamed with thoughts of worldly greatness and of the splendour of the position which they hoped would be theirs, and sought for a promise of pre-eminence in the Kingdom (Matt. xx. 20 ff.). "But Jesus answered and said, Ye know not what ye ask. Are ye able to drink the cup that I am about to drink? They say unto Him, We are able. He saith unto them, My cup indeed ye shall drink; but to sit on My right hand and on My left hand, is not Mine to give, but it is for them for whom it has been prepared of My Father." Here again is the allusion to the terrible sacrifice through which the Kingdom must be won. The incident was, however, not at an end. The other disciples were moved with indignation against James and John, for the minds of all were still in bondage to worldly conceptions of the Kingdom. They needed teaching as to what was to be accounted greatness in the Kingdom of God. "Jesus called them unto Him and said, Ye know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great ones exercise authority over them. Not so shall it be among you: but whosoever would become great among you shall be your minister; and whosoever would be first among you shall be your servant." And then He added that same great argument which He had urged upon them so often: His own example: "Even as the Son of Man came not to be ministered unto but to minister, and to give His life a ransom for many".

22. A Statement of the Atonement.—The statement of the atonement contained in these words is one of the fullest and most exact in Holy Scripture, short as the sentence is which expresses it. In form the reference is an incidental allusion. But it is so clear and full in meaning that there can be no room for doubt that our Lord intended to make an important statement of the course His work of salvation was to follow. That course ran in a direction exactly opposite to the tendency of the disciples' thoughts at the time. The moment had come when it was necessary to tell them plainly that only through His own death was it possible that His work could be done, His mission accomplished, His Kingdom established. If they desired to be true disciples and worthy members of the Kingdom, above all, if they wished for greatness in the Kingdom, they must follow their Master in the way of sacrifice and service. Therefore it was necessary they should know clearly what that sacrifice and service were to be.

23. Redemption.—The work of Christ for men is here described as a redemption. He gave His life as a ransom. He died that many might be redeemed. It is often forgotten that this account of the meaning of our Lord's death carried a much more definite idea to the minds of the Jewish disciples than it does to us. We have but little to do with ransoms in the transactions of our day. The Jews on the other hand had endless experience of the theory and

practice of redemption. Ransoms were paid for slaves, for captives, for the first-born, for a man's own life. They rescued from death, they averted divine judgments (see Exod. xiii. 13, xxx. 12-16, xxxiv. 20; Levit. xxv. 25 ff., 47 ff.; Num. xviii. 15, xxxv. 31, etc. See also Dale, *The Atonement*, Lect. III.). When therefore our Lord declared that He came to give His life a ransom for many, there was no doubt of the meaning which His words would convey to the ears of His hearers.

24. The Lord's Supper and the Atonement.—There remain to be considered those passages in which our Lord spoke of the meaning of His death immediately before it took place. Most important is that in which we have an account of the institution of the Lord's Supper. The solemnity of the occasion, the ordered gravity of all the circumstances, the institution of a solemn rite to commemorate the work which was about to be done, all these attach a peculiar, a unique importance to the declaration which was then made. The New Testament contains four accounts of the scene (Matt. xxvi. 26-28; Mark xiv. 22-24; Luke xxii. 19, 20; 1 Cor. xi. 23-25). No two of these correspond exactly. But all agree that our Lord connected the rite with the conception of His death as a sacrifice on behalf of men. This is most distinctly brought out by St. Luke (see R. V. There is documentary evidence against the text, but the balance of authority is in favour of it), because in his account our Lord introduces the conception

twice, both with the bread and with the wine. "This is My body *which is given for you*," and again, "This cup is the new covenant in My blood, even *that which is poured out for you*." But St. Matthew, though he only records one mention by our Lord of the sacrificial nature of His death as having been made on this occasion, gives a fuller statement. "He took a cup, and gave thanks, and gave to them, saying, Drink ye all of it; for this is My blood of the covenant, *which is shed for many unto remission of sins*." St. Mark's account is like St. Matthew's, but shorter. He omits the words "unto remission of sins," but retains the statement that Christ's blood "*is shed for many*". In St. Paul's account the same idea occurs in the form, "This is My body which is for you" (see R.V. 1 Cor. xi. 24). In all, then, the sacrificial aspect of our Lord's death is dwelt upon. He gave His body over to death, His blood to be shed, "for many unto the remission of sins," and He ordained a solemn feast by which His disciples were ever to hold a commemoration of the great sacrifice.

25. Love and Sacrifice.—One more passage must be mentioned. That very night, after the solemn supper, our Lord addressed His disciples in the wonderful words which have been preserved for us by St. John (chapters xiv., xv., xvi.). He spoke to them of the love they should have to one another. "This is My commandment, that ye love one another even as I have loved you." And how had Christ loved His own? "Greater love hath no

man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.”

26. Place of the Atonement in Our Lord's Teaching.—The atonement through His own death is, then, most distinctly taught by our Lord Himself. The number of the passages which have just been reviewed, together with their extraordinary solemnity, make us feel that the Death for man's salvation was no after-thought of Christian reflection. It was one of the most important elements in our Lord's teaching as well as in His work. It is indeed to be regarded as the climax to which the whole great sacrifice of His life, with its incessant self-denial, necessarily led. And in the thought of Christ it occupies an equally important position. The *Atonement* must be placed side by side with the *Incarnation*, and the two must stand as the great ruling ideas in the religious teaching of our Lord concerning Himself. Yet both are taught in a religious rather than in a theological manner (see p. 100). The Great Teacher knew how to present them so as to make them affect the life of men before they began to engage his systematising intelligence. Therefore we must feel no surprise that our Lord's way of putting these conceptions did not anticipate the definitions of the schools. It was infinitely better for man's religion and man's life that the age of definitions was delayed by the wisdom of the Master. He gave to man the *Living Truth*, the basis and material upon which theology worked when it began its operations.

27. Summary of Our Lord's Teaching on the Atonement.—In the teaching of our Lord the atonement is the redemption of men from sin by the giving of the life of Christ. It is the remission of sins by the Death of Christ and the shedding of His blood. It is the expression of love, for love cannot show itself by a sacrifice greater than that by which a man lays down his life for his friends. It is the losing of life to find it. It is the corn of wheat falling into the ground that it may perish, and by the fact of perishing bear much fruit (John xii. 24). It is the necessary step to the full accomplishment of the great purpose of the life of Christ. He came to destroy the works of the devil (1 John iii. 8), and establish eternally the Kingdom of righteousness and love. Only through a work of atonement could the great end be attained.

28. Conflict with Evil.—We have already seen something of our Lord's view of sin. To Him it was an inconceivably awful thing. It was the great foe to love and to God (see p. 68). It was that which hindered the coming of the Kingdom. The truth of this is seen more perfectly by considering an element in our Lord's life which is revealed as much by some of the spiritual experiences through which He passed as by any of His utterances. His life was a constant struggle with evil. He had to contend against some tremendous force which opposed itself to the work which He came to do. This conflict is brought out prominently in the account

of the temptation. But it appears time after time throughout the whole of His ministry until the hour of His death, and some of these instances of its appearance are in their way even more impressive and suggestive than the accounts of the temptation. Thus, when St. Peter (Matt. xvi. 22 ff.), after our Lord had made a solemn announcement of His sufferings and death, presented, in his own impulsive manner, the idea that it was impossible the Christ of God should so suffer and die, our Lord turned upon His apostle with words of passionate rebuke, "Get thee behind Me, Satan: thou art a stumblingblock unto Me: for thou mindest not the things of God, but the things of men". The thought presented by St. Peter to his Lord was evidently a familiar and powerful temptation, the temptation to claim the exalted privilege of His station and turn away from the humiliation and agony of His death. There was an awful force in the expression, "Get thee behind Me, Satan". It proceeded from the very heart of the Lord, as He felt that His own apostle was become the means of besetting Him with the most deadly of all temptations. It was out of the depth of His spiritual experience, as He overcame the temptation, that there came the profound statement of the law of sacrifice, "Whosoever would save his life shall lose it".

29. Our Lord's Horror at His Death.—When the crucifixion drew near these indications of a great spiritual struggle increased in number and intensity.

In John xii. there is a singularly impressive account of our Lord's action and language immediately after the visit of the Greeks (verses 21, 22). He spoke of His death as His glorification (verse 23), and again taught the principle of sacrifice (verses 24, 25). Then, with a sudden change, there burst from Him, as from one in agony, a cry to God: "Now is my soul troubled and what shall I say? Father, save Me from this hour; but for this cause came I unto this hour. Father, glorify Thy name." There was some horror, to us inscrutable, in that approaching death. It was, to Him, a conflict with the powers of evil. For, shortly afterwards, when the serenity of His intercourse with His Father had been restored, He said, "Now is the judgment of this world: now shall the prince of this world be cast out".

30. The Agony in the Garden.—But perhaps the most terribly striking instance is the Agony in the Garden. Here the great temptation to turn aside from the suffering and shame of the cross is clearly presented, and the awful intensity of the spiritual conflict occasioned by the temptation is exhibited by physical effects as well as by the repeated prayer, "O My Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass away from Me" (Matt. xxvi. 39). In His agony He went to and fro, appealing for sympathy to His drowsy unheeding apostles, then returning to the place of prayer to pour out His heart to His Father, until at length there came the decision, "Thy will be done". Such a scene as this makes us understand certain brief

utterances belonging to the same part of His ministry. "The prince of this world cometh and hath nothing in Me" (John xiv. 30). "This is your hour, and the power of darkness" (Luke xxii. 53). All these passages show that our Lord regarded the cross to which he was moving as the final struggle in a long conflict with the powers of evil. These He overcame completely, finally. In losing His life He gained the victory.

31. The Sin against the Holy Ghost.—This view of our Lord's life and death explains the horror which He felt when His beneficent work was attributed to the Evil One. The most tremendous denunciation in the whole Gospel history is that of the sin against the Holy Ghost. It was drawn forth by those who said, "He casteth out devils by Beelzebub the prince of the devils". The answer of Christ shows that He viewed His work as so essentially and so manifestly a work of overcoming and destroying evil that only the most perverse and wilful opposition to the good could produce such a misrepresentation. He showed that it was impossible for such work as His to be Satan's: Satan could not be so divided against himself. He described Himself as the one who enters into the strong man's house and divides the spoil. Finally He gave a warning so mysterious and so awful that it has shaken the hearts of men ever since (see Matt. xii. 22 ff.; Luke xi. 14 ff.).

32. Our Lord's Own Conviction as to His Work.—All these considerations conspire together to make

us feel how intense was our Lord's conviction that He came into the world to effect a great work of overcoming the evil and delivering men from its power; and that that work was accomplished through His sacrifice, and especially the sacrifice of His death. The Atonement is perhaps more powerfully taught by the fragmentary utterances which we have considered, taken along with the experiences and events through which Christ passed, than by any other set of passages in the New Testament.

33. The Cross Teaches Concerning Sin.—It has often been said that nothing reveals the tremendous nature of sin so clearly as the cross of Jesus. The saying is profoundly true. It is true historically and it is true theologically. To the pagan mind, sin was simply the missing of the best. Philosophic paganism regarded it as, in essence, ignorance. Every man would choose the best if he knew how. So regarded, sin was not sin at all. The Jewish mind had learned more about sin, for the discipline of the law had not been without effect. The fifty-first Psalm is one of the most profound expressions of penitence in existence: "Against Thee, Thee only, have I sinned". Here is that deep conviction of sin as an offence against God which belongs to the true spiritual realisation of its nature. But, like many other parts of the Old Testament, that Psalm means far more since Christ lived and died than it meant before. The cross has taught us to think of

sin as that which it required the sacrifice of the Son of God to take away. He gave His life a ransom for many, otherwise there could have been no deliverance. He shed His blood for the remission of sins, otherwise sin could never have been remitted. The horror, the agony, the cry upon the cross, teach more powerfully than any exposition, how immeasurable was the price of redemption. From all these men have learned the "sinfulness of sin" as none could have learned it before.

CHAPTER VII.

THE PARACLETE.

1. The Kingdom and the Power of Christ's Life.—We come now to the last great division of our subject. We have seen that our Lord came to found a Kingdom, a great social order based on the principle of love and essentially spiritual in character. This community was to look up to God as the Father, and so to regard itself as a family of brothers and sisters under the Divine headship. Its members were to enter into this new life through repentance and faith, and in it to realise a righteousness of heart and life far exceeding the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees. The possibility of such a thing as this in a world like ours would have been incredible to all but for the way in which our Lord presented and manifested Himself to men. He demanded the whole-hearted devotion to Himself of all who desired to accept His teaching. He spoke as one who knew the very heart of God. The manner in which He said "My Father" made men feel that He stood in a special relation to God. He not only claimed a superhuman authority, but made that authority actual. Gradually His followers began to perceive

that in their Lord Himself lay the power which would realise the Kingdom. Son of Man, He was yet one with the Father. God had come into human life in a new and wonderful manner.

2. The Kingdom and the Power of Christ's Death.—The power of the life of Christ found its complement in the power of His death. The one made the Kingdom to be, the other overcame the great foe of the Kingdom. At first, when our Lord foretold His death, it seemed to the disciples that He spoke unmeaning riddles. They could not understand. Later, when that death actually happened, they feared all was lost. But our Lord's own prophecies were fulfilled. He had died to live. He had lost to gain. The corn of wheat had fallen into the earth. From its perishing sprang an abundant harvest. Evil was vanquished, sin overcome, in the very moment when they seemed triumphant. By His death He had redeemed His people and won their life.

3. Our Lord's preparation for the future of His Kingdom.—Thus through the life and death of Christ the Kingdom came into being and was established. But the Kingdom was for the future. As created by our Lord's work on earth it was but a beginning. It was but the mustard seed, the leaven. The growth, the spreading, had still to come. This He distinctly contemplated, He had taught His faithful ever to pray "Thy Kingdom come". The Kingdom stood not only for the small beginning

which had been made, but for a perfect realisation of the whole design in a glorious future. That was the great end for which all members should strive and pray and work. Towards the close of His ministry, we find Christ making preparation for the future development of the Kingdom. Some of the greatest passages in His later teachings are devoted to this subject. It is with these that we are now mainly concerned. And the central object upon which we have to concentrate our attention is the promise of the Spirit.

4. The Work of the Spirit in the Synoptics.— In the Synoptic Gospels the work of the Spirit does not occupy as prominent a position as in St. John. There are however frequent references to it in the sayings of our Lord. Adopting the words of an Old Testament prophet, He declared in the synagogue of Nazareth that His mission was inspired by the Spirit of God (Luke iv. 18). When the Pharisees attributed His power over evil spirits to the Prince of such spirits, our Lord pointedly affirmed that it was by “the Spirit of God” His work was done. “If I by the Spirit of God cast out devils, then is the Kingdom of God come upon you” (Matt. xii. 28). The force of this affirmation is immensely strengthened by the words on the awfulness of the sin against the Holy Ghost which follow. The connexion of the Spirit’s work with the future of the Church is also to be found in the Synoptics. Christ warned His disciples that they would, in carrying out the mission

He gave them, be brought before governors and kings for His sake. In view of this certainty, He commanded them not to be anxious about the defence they should make, "for it shall be given you in that hour what ye shall speak. For it is not ye that speak, but the Spirit of your Father that speaketh in you" (Matt. x. 20). There is also a very distinct promise of the gift of the Holy Spirit: "If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask Him?" (Luke xi. 13). But there is one passage in the Synoptics which is more important than all the rest. St. Matthew (xxviii. 19) tells us that, when our Lord was giving commission to His disciples after His Resurrection, He used certain great words which revealed the scope of the Church's operations and defined the method of organisation which was to be adopted: "Go ye therefore, and make disciples of all the nations, baptising them into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost". Here is the germ of the theological doctrine of the Trinity. But there is religion as well as theology. The Great Name of God into which Christians are to be baptised is defined as the Name of the Three. That means surely that in the development of the Kingdom the work of the Holy Ghost takes its place along with that of the Father and that of the Son.

5. The Gospel of the Spirit.—But it is in the fourth Gospel that we find this element of our

Lord's teaching most fully given. It is natural that it should be so, because it is the fourth Gospel that, in accordance with its supplemental character, gives us the deeper and inner view of our Lord's Person and life. This Gospel seems to correspond to the somewhat later and more reflective side of early Christian thought. It proceeded from one who knew the mind of the Christ more intimately than any one else and who was therefore able to satisfy the questionings of Christian reflection as no other disciple could have done. The Gospel of St. John has been described by many epithets. It might be called, among other descriptive titles, the Gospel of the Spirit.

6. The Teaching of John iii.—In this Gospel will be found a number of important passages in which our Lord connects the spiritual life of every individual believer and the continuous existence of the Kingdom with the work of the Divine Spirit. Also, in this Gospel, the distinct personality of the Spirit is plainly indicated. First among those passages which speak of the life of the individual must be mentioned John iii. 5 ff. Here the beginning of spiritual life is said to be due to the operation of the Spirit: "Except a man be born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit." The members of the Kingdom must have passed through the new birth, they must have been quickened by the Spirit.

7. The Spirit as the Water of Life.—In the fourth and seventh chapters our Lord speaks of Himself as the source from which the Spirit flows to the soul of man. “Whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall become in him a well of water springing up unto eternal life” (John iv. 14). And in the seventh chapter (verses 37-39): at the Feast of Tabernacles, “Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst let him come unto Me and drink. He that believeth on Me, as the Scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water. But this spake He of the Spirit, which they that believed on Him were to receive: for the Spirit was not yet given; because Jesus was not yet glorified.” This latter passage is the best possible commentary upon the former. It is also interesting to connect both with John xx. 22: “When He had said this, He breathed on them and saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost”.

8. The Discourse in the Upper Room.—The principal part of our Lord’s teaching on the ministry of the Spirit is contained in the great discourse on the night before the Passion (John xiv.-xvi.). This discourse was in form and in substance an instruction given by our Lord to His disciples to prepare them for the events which were to happen so soon, and also to fit them for the life and work which lay before them after His departure from the world. It is this discourse and the teaching

which it gives about the work of the Holy Ghost which more especially make us connect that work with the whole history of the Church and with the development of the Kingdom throughout the ages. Having told His disciples that He was about to leave them, and having given them comfort and encouragement, Christ made a promise. The disciples were not to be left alone and unassisted in their labours and trials. "I will pray the Father and He shall give you another Comforter (*Advocate*, in Greek *Paraclete*) that He may be with you for ever" (xiv. 16). The Son had to go away from His people, the Spirit would remain with them continually. Yet the presence of the Spirit would mean also, in a true sense, the presence of the Son: "I will not leave you desolate: I come unto you" (xiv. 18).

9. The Spirit's Work Declared.—Again and again in this discourse Christ returned to the same subject. "The Comforter, even the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He shall teach you all things and bring to your remembrance all that I said unto you" (xiv. 26). "He shall bear witness of Me" (xv. 26). "When He is come He will convict the world in respect of sin, and of righteousness and of judgment" (xvi. 8). "He shall guide you into all truth." "He shall declare unto you the things that are to come. He shall glorify Me; for He shall take of Mine and shall declare it unto you" (xvi. 13 ff.). Also, this work of the Spirit depended on the departure of Christ. "It

is expedient for you that I go away ; for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you ; but if I go, I will send Him unto you " (xvi. 7). His coming and His work were therefore especially connected with the carrying on of what Christ had begun. The Spirit was to be given as a source of illumination, revelation, spiritual power for the people of Christ throughout the development of Christ's Kingdom in the world.

10. Personality of the Spirit.—It is from these passages in the fourth Gospel that we learn definitely that our Lord regarded the Spirit as a Person distinct from the Father and from Himself. The emphatic masculine pronoun which is employed in the original Greek indicates this unmistakably. "HE shall teach you all things." The word is repeated over and over again and always as the subject of some personal activity. HE is to bear witness, convict the world, guide, glorify Christ, etc. But the very title Paraclete, which our Lord gives to the Spirit, marks the same truth. This name means, strictly, the Advocate, one who is called to another's side. It seems to imply mainly the office of the Holy Ghost as the Helper, Succourer, of Christian people in the absence of their Lord. He is Christ's substitute, representative on earth. The personality of the Spirit is therefore implied in the very nature of the work assigned to Him. All this reacts upon our consideration of the baptismal formula (Matt. xxviii. 19) and makes us find in the

thought of our Lord Himself a recognition of the truth of that great doctrine of the Godhead which the Church came to hold as the doctrine of the Trinity.

11. Relation of the Spirit to the Father and the Son.—Our last conclusion is strengthened by the way in which the relation of the Spirit to the Father and the Son is described. His coming is a coming of Christ Himself (John xiv. 18). He “proceeds” from the Father and is sent by the Son (xv. 26). “He shall not speak from Himself; but what things soever He shall hear, these shall He speak” (xvi. 13). “He shall glorify Me; for He shall take of Mine, and shall declare it unto you. All things whatsoever the Father hath are Mine; therefore said I, that He taketh of Mine and shall declare it unto you” (xvi. 15). These words correspond remarkably with the manner in which the relation of the Father and the Son is spoken of in the earlier discourses. Our Lord says (viii. 26), “He that sent Me is true; and the things which I heard from Him, these speak I unto the world”. “I do nothing of Myself, but as the Father taught Me, I speak these things” (verse 28). “I speak the things which I have seen with My Father” (verse 38). All such utterances are summed up in the sentence, “I and the Father are one” (x. 30). The teachings about the Spirit make us realise that the Unity of the Father and the Son includes the Spirit also. And all taken together convince us that the Great Name of the Father and

the Son and the Holy Ghost has been rightly interpreted by the consciousness of Christendom.

12. The Spirit Carries on the Work of Christ.—Having thus attempted to show the position which our Lord's teaching assigns to the Spirit, we have to consider the nature of His work. His primary function in relation to the Kingdom is to be, as we have seen, the representative of Christ. He is to teach, guide, and illuminate the disciples after their Lord's departure from them. His presence is to be as the presence of Christ. He is to carry on the work of Christ. His coming is indeed so necessary to the completion of this work that our Lord says, "It is expedient for you that I go away; for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I go, I will send Him unto you" (xvi. 7).

13. The Teaching Function of the Spirit.—The Spirit was to take up the teaching work of Christ. "He shall teach you all things" (xiv. 26). We learn from the Gospel history that the disciples were slow to apprehend their Master's teaching. Especially, as regards the Kingdom, they found it very hard to rid their minds of the worldly conceptions of its nature which were current among the Jews. Even when our Lord made very plain statements about Himself and the new order of things which He was founding, they seemed unable to grasp His meaning. Some provision for their instruction after His departure was necessary. And so He says of the Spirit, "He shall teach you all things and bring to

your remembrance all that I said unto you" (xiv. 26). They required to learn afresh all that they had heard from Christ. This they should do under the influence of the Spirit. Also they needed to be prepared for the future and the great work which they were called to do. Therefore our Lord says, "He shall guide you into all the truth," "He shall declare unto you the things that are to come" (xvi. 13). The Holy Spirit was to enable them to face all the vast problems of that great new order that they were to be the means of establishing.

14. Bearing Witness to Christ.—In addition, there is assigned to the Spirit a special function in relation to our Lord. "He shall bear witness of Me" (xv. 26). "He shall glorify Me; for He shall take of Mine, and shall declare it unto you." Throughout our Lord's teaching there is a very emphatic insistence on the importance of the relation of the human soul to Himself. He claims the highest devotion, the faith and love of man's heart. It is by means of this relation to the Lord that man is to be saved. But in the absence of the Lord how is man to be brought into this relation? The answer to this question is contained in the passages now under consideration. Divine wisdom has made special provision for this very thing. The Holy Spirit is to be Christ's representative on earth, bearing witness, glorifying Him, declaring the things of Christ to men.

15. The Spirit and the World.—The Spirit has also a function as regards the world. "When He is

come, He will convict the world in respect of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment; of sin, because they believe not on Me; of righteousness, because I go to the Father, and ye see Me no more; of judgment, because the prince of this world hath been judged" (xvi. 8 ff.). Thus the work of the Spirit was necessary to the accomplishment of the great mission which our Lord gave to His disciples. They had need of much instruction. They had to gain insight into the meaning of all that they had already heard and experienced. They had to learn deeper and truer views of their Master, His Person and work. They had to realise the nature of their mission and the aims they were to set before themselves. Also, the world had to be dealt with. Mere human knowledge and power was unequal to this task. How could the handful of disciples reach the heart of the world and make it feel the reality of the great facts of sin and righteousness and judgment? For such a work a power higher than human was necessary. And so there was given to the disciples the promise of the coming of the Spirit.

16. The Fulfilment of Our Lord's Promise.—

How the promise was kept we learn from the Acts and the Epistles. And it is certainly very surprising to note the power, insight, devotion, which marked the lives and doings of the Apostles and their companions after the great day of Pentecost. Men who had been doubting, hesitating, quailing, became confident, decided, fearless. Some new certainty

and some new power had entered into them. Their minds which had seemed almost blind to the more spiritual side of their Master's teaching were suddenly illuminated. Their wills were inspired with irresistible purpose. Jesus Christ became a far more vivid reality to them in His absence than He had been in His presence. The promise recorded in Acts i. 8, "Ye shall receive power when the Holy Ghost is come upon you; and ye shall be My witnesses," was kept to the letter. The only adequate explanation of these things is that the accounts given in the New Testament of the Resurrection of our Lord and of the giving of the Holy Ghost are literally true.

17. St. Luke's Testimony to the Promise.—It is important to note how St. Luke in the beginning of the Acts corroborates St. John's account of our Lord's promise of the Spirit. In Acts i. 4, we read that Christ, after His Resurrection, charged His disciples "not to depart from Jerusalem, but to wait for the promise of the Father, which, said He, ye heard from Me". This promise is alluded to in St. Luke's own Gospel (xxiv. 49), but is given only in John xiv.-xvi. But the corroboration extends much farther, for the whole history contained in the Acts is explicable only on the principles laid down by our Lord in the passages recorded by St. John.

18. The Spirit Guiding the Process of History.—The work of the Holy Ghost is therefore connected with the extension and development of the Kingdom.

By Him the Father and the Son operate and cooperate in that great moral and spiritual process by which the evil is gradually overcome and the good established in the hearts and lives of men, and in the social organism. He is the instrument of regeneration in the individual and in the community. He is also the Master of the movements of thought. He guides into all truth. The movements of thought are dominated by ruling ideas, ideas which present certain great ends to men as the supremely desirable objects at which they should aim and so become, in the true sense, IDEALS. Chief among all such is the Kingdom. It is the great Ideal which is to be realised in and through the love of the Father, the submission of human hearts to the rule of the Son, and the superintending influence of the Holy Ghost. By this influence the aims of men are to be subordinated to the one supreme end, so that at last the Kingdom may come in its fulness.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE FULNESS OF CHRIST.

1. Summary of Results.—We have now reached the end of our brief and rapid attempt to obtain a view of the ruling ideas of our Lord. It remains simply to sum up in a few sentences the main results of our examination. We have especially to endeavour to draw the moral and the religious ideas together more closely, so that we may understand how perfectly complementary they are.

2. The Kingdom.—Dominating the whole realm of the moral ideas is the great conception of the Kingdom. It is essentially a *Social Ideal*, a glorious vision of a universe of souls bound together by love. In it, the supreme blessing is a common blessing, a blessing for all and a blessing for each. This Kingdom exists already on earth wherever the principle of love prevails. But its realisation here and now is imperfect. In its perfect form it is the absolute Ideal, the *Summum Bonum*, the great end which all human conduct should strive to realise, for which all should work and pray, and in the realisation of which all its members shall find their eternal realisation.

3. The Members of the Kingdom.—Those who

desire to enter this Kingdom must begin as little children. They must recognise their need, their spiritual poverty. They must repent. They must, that is, renounce the evil and worldly life and assume an attitude of spiritual receptivity. Then they will be in a position to acquire the pure heart and sincere mind which are essential to those who would finally arrive at that highest type of character which is modelled upon that of the Great Father Himself. The character of God, marked above all by the supreme attribute of love, is the *Ideal Character*. Thus, both on the side of conduct and on that of character, the moral teaching of our Lord is positive, not negative, as has so often been asserted. On the side of conduct, the rule to "seek the Kingdom" is essentially an active principle; and on the side of character, the exaltation of the attribute of love throws the emphasis on the positive element in the moral life.

4. The Growth of the Kingdom.—The Kingdom grows, not only in the heart and life of the individual, but also in the life of the human race. To this latter side of moral progress, our Lord devotes a number of striking parables. These teach us that the Kingdom is to be in the world as a great reorganising principle. Like the leaven, it is to spread through the whole till all is leavened. Here our Lord's teaching touches on the political and ecclesiastical organisations of the world, and implies that all will ultimately be made to subserve the coming of the Kingdom.

The profound and prophetic character of this part of the teaching, taken together with the history of Christianity, especially in the earlier centuries, shows that our Lord did not omit from the range of His ethical vision all consideration of duty to the State, as superficial critics have frequently asserted.

5. The Final Realisation of the Kingdom.—

Lastly, Christ kept steadily before Him the great final realisation of the Ideal. He constantly looked at the present in the light of the future, and He impressed most forcibly on the minds of His hearers the necessity of ever living and working with the great end in view. Thus, He knew, the worker would be lifted above the mere worldly standpoint and would be kept true to the master-rule of all high and holy living. He made His people pray, "Thy Kingdom come".

6. The Moral Rests upon the Religious.—The wonderful presentation of the meaning of human life which we have just outlined would be a mere castle in the air, a thing wholly unpractical, if it were not grounded upon and strengthened by certain great religious ideas. What these ideas are we have already attempted to see. But it would, as we have indeed understood, be truer to say that the moral ideas were made effective by a great revelation of God.

7. The Fatherhood of God.—Foremost among the principles of this revelation is the Fatherhood of God. The Kingdom is founded in the nature of

God. God is love, therefore the Kingdom is. This principle is the bed-rock which underlies every part of the Christian revelation. There is no element in it which does not go down deep below the surface of things to this ultimate truth. The Kingdom, Christ, His work, His life, His death and resurrection, the functions of the Spirit, all rest upon the Love of the Father. And God is most fully revealed as the Father in the consciousness of Jesus.

8. Evil.—There are certain apparently insuperable difficulties in the way of the coming of the Kingdom. There is man's spiritual blindness and the dulness of his heart. There is his selfishness, each one striving for a good which he claims to have and enjoy without reference to his neighbour. There is sin in all its forms, mighty because of its hold upon man's corrupted nature, and because of its power in the world, that is, its hold upon the social life of man. There is evil as a power in the universe striving against the good.

9. Victory through Christ.—Our Lord Himself is the means of overcoming these difficulties. He is Himself the revelation of God. He is the glory of God flashing out upon the darkness of this world, so that the dull eyes of sinful men may see it. He is the Love of God so presented that the hard hearts of men may be touched by it. As Incarnate God, He is Himself the bond of union between God and men, and among men of all conditions and races. By His life, death and resurrection He has overcome the

evil, redeemed mankind, and made pardon and reconciliation possible. By the power of His love He has given to men a moral power never before available. This great revelation of Divine Love and mercy gives to Jesus Christ a supreme claim upon the hearts of men, a claim which He urges with an imperativeness which cannot be mistaken. And why does He so urge His claim? Because faith in Him, the yielding to His claim, is the means by which the Kingdom is to be realised in the hearts and lives of men.

10. The Spirit.—But Jesus Christ has gone from earth, and how can man trust in Him; and how can His army gain victory over evil, when the Lord Himself is not upon the scene of the conflict? But He is here, though unseen, by His great Representative, the Holy Ghost. There is a Divine superintendence of human thoughts and efforts. The Spirit of God is at work in the world, striving with the evil and overcoming it, guiding those who seek for guidance, giving power for moral conquest, overruling the course of this world, bringing in the Kingdom of Eternal Love.

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